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RAVENNA

S. APOLLINARE NUOVO.

RAVENNA

A STUDY

BY

EDWARD HUTTON

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a.c.

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TO MY FRIEND

ARTHUR SYMONS

IN AFFECTIONATE HOMAGE

PREFACE

My intention in writing this book has been to demonstrate the unique importance of Ravenna in the history of Italy and of Europe, especially during the Dark Age from the time of Alaric's first descent into the Cisalpine plain to the coming of Charlemagne. That importance, as it seems to me, has been wholly or almost wholly misunderstood, and certainly, as I understand it, has never been explained. In this book, which is offered to the public not without a keen sense of its inadequacy, I have tried to show in as clear a manner as was at my command, what Ravenna really was in the political geography of the empire, and to explain the part that position allowed her to play in the great tragedy of the decline and fall of the Roman administration. If I have succeeded in this I am amply repaid for all the labour the book has cost me.

The principal sources, both ancient and modern, which I have consulted in the preparation of this volume have been cited, but I must here acknowledge the special debt I owe to the late Dr. Hodgkin, to Professor Diehl, to Dr. Corrado Ricci, and to the many contributors to the various Italian Bollettini which I have ransacked.

E. H.

March 1913.

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RAVENNA

A STUDY

I.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL AND POLITICAL POSITION OF RAVENNA

Upon the loneliest and most desolate shore of Italy, where the vast monotony of the Emilian plain fades away at last, almost imperceptibly, into the Adrian Sea, there stands, half abandoned in that soundless place, and often wrapt in a white shroud of mist, a city like a marvellous reliquary, richly wrought, as is meet, beautiful with many fading colours, and encrusted with precious stones: its name is Ravenna.

It stands there laden with the mysterious centuries as with half barbaric jewels, weighed down with the ornaments of Byzantium, rigid, hieratic, constrained; and however you come to it, whether from Rimini by the lost and forgotten towns of Classis and Cæsarea, or from Ferrara through all the bitter desolation of Comacchio, or across the endless marsh from Bologna or Faenza, its wide and empty horizons, its astonishing silence, and the difficulty of every approach will seem to you but a fitting environment for a place so solitary and so imperious.

For this city of mute and closed churches, where imperishable mosaics glisten in the awful damp, and beautiful pillars

of most precious marbles gleam through a humid mist, of mausoleums empty but indestructible, of tottering *campanili*, of sumptuous splendour and incredible decay, is the sepulchre of the great civilisation which Christianity failed to save alive, but to which we owe everything and out of which we are come; the only monument that remains to us of those confused and half barbaric centuries which lie between Antiquity and the Middle Age.

Mysteriously secured by nature and doubly so after the failure of the Roman administration, Ravenna was the death-bed of the empire and its tomb. To her the emperor Honorius fled from Milan in the first years of the fifth century; within her walls Odoacer dethroned the last emperor of the West, founded a kingdom, and was in his turn supplanted by Theodoric the Ostrogoth. It was from her almost impregnable isolation that the attempt was made by Byzantium—it seemed and perhaps it was our only hope—to reconquer Italy and the West for civilisation; while her fall before the appalling Lombard onset in the eighth century brought Pepin into Italy in 754, to lay the foundation of a new Christendom, to establish the temporal power of the papacy, and to prophesy of the resurrection of the empire, of the unity of Europe.

But though it is as the imperishable monument of those tragic centuries that we rightly look upon Ravenna: before the empire was founded she was already famous. It was from her silence that Cæsar emerged to cross the Rubicon and all unknowing to found what, when all is said, was the most beneficent, as it was the most universal, government that Europe has ever known. In the first years of that government Ravenna became, and through the four hundred years of its unhampered life she remained, one of its greatest bulwarks. While upon its failure, as I have said, she suddenly assumed a position which for some three hundred and fifty years was unique not only in Italy but in Europe. And when with the re-establishment of an universal government

her importance declined and at length passed away, she yet lived on in the minds and the memory of men as something fabulous, and still, curiously enough, as a refuge, the refuge of the great poet of the new age; so that to-day, beside the empty tombs of Galla Placidia and Theodoric, there stands the great sarcophagus which holds the dust of Dante Alighieri.

We may well ask how it was that a city so solitary, so inaccessible, and so remote should have played so great a part in the history of Europe. It is to answer this question that I have set myself to write this book, which is rather an essay *in memoriam* of her greatness, her beauty, and her forlorn hope, than a history properly so called of Ravenna. But if we are to come to any real understanding of what she stood for, of what she meant to us once upon a time, we must first of all decide for ourselves what was the fundamental reason of her great renown. I shall maintain in this book that the cause of her greatness, of her opportunity for greatness, was always the same, namely, her geographical position in relation to the peninsula of Italy, the Cisalpine plain, and the sea. Let us then consider these things.

Italy, the country we know as Italy, properly understood, is fundamentally divided into two absolutely different parts by a great range of mountains, the Apennines, which stretches roughly from sea to sea, from Genoa almost but not quite to Rimini.

The country which lies to the south of that line of mountains is Italy proper, and it consists as we know of a long narrow mountainous peninsula, while its history throughout antiquity may be said to be altogether Roman.

What lies to the north of the Apennines is not Italy at all, but Cisalpine Gaul.

In its nature this country is altogether continental. It consists for the most part of a vast plain divided from west to east by a great river, the Po, and everywhere it is watered and nourished by its two hundred tributaries.

Shut off as it is on the south from Italy proper by the Apennines, this plain is defended from Gaul and the Germanies, on the west and the north, by the mightiest mountains in Europe, the Alps, which here enclose it in a vast concave rampart that stretches from the Mediterranean to the Adriatic. On the east it is contained by the sea.

The history of this vast country before the Roman Conquest is, as is history everywhere in the West before that event, vague and obscure. But this at least may be said: it was first in the occupation of the Etruscans, who in time were turned out, destroyed, or enslaved by the Gauls, those invaders who crossed the Alps from the west and who during nearly two hundred years, continually, though never with an enduring success, invaded Italy, and in 388 B.C. actually captured the City. Rome, however, had by the year 223 B.C. succeeded in planting her fortresses at Placentia and Cremona

and in fortifying Mutina (Modena), when suddenly in 218 B.C. Hannibal unexpectedly descended into the Cisalpine plain and destroyed all she had achieved. With his defeat, however, the conquest of Cisalpine Gaul was undertaken anew, and at some time after 183 B.C.—we do not know exactly when—the whole of this vast lowland country passed into Roman administration, to become the chief province of Cæsar's great triple command, and one of the most valuable parts of the empire.

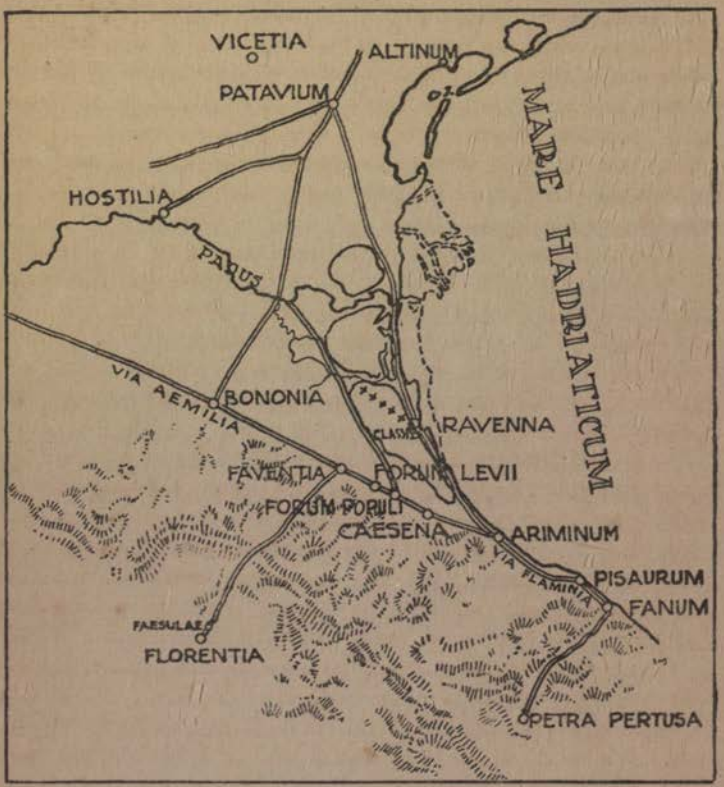
What, then, is the relation of this vast lowland country between the Alps and the Apennines to Italy proper? It stands as it has always stood to her as a great defence. For if, as we must, we consider Italy as the shrine, the sanctuary, and the citadel of Europe, a place apart and separate—and because of this she has been able to do her work both secular and religious—what has secured her but Cisalpine Gaul? The valley of the Po, all this vast plain, appears in history as the cockpit of Europe, the battlefield of the Celt, the Phœnician, the Latin, and the Teuton, of Catholic and Arian, strewn with victories, littered with defeats, the theatre of those great wars which have built up Europe and the modern world. If the Gauls had not been broken by the plain, they would perhaps have overwhelmed Italy and Rome; if Hannibal had found there enemies instead of friends, the Oriental would not so nearly have overthrown Europe. It broke the Gothic invasion, Attila never crossed it, it absorbed the worst of the appalling Lombard flood; Italy remains to us because of it.

Now since Cisalpine Gaul thus secured Italy, the entry from the one to the other, the road between them must always have been of an immense importance. That entry and that road, whenever they were in dispute, Ravenna commanded, and a good half of her importance lies in this.

I say whenever they were in dispute: in time of peace that road and that entry were not in the keeping of Ravenna but of Rimini.

A study of the map will show us that though the Apennines

shut off Italy proper from Cisalpine Gaul along a line roughly from Genoa to Rimini, actually that difficult and barren range just fails to reach the Adriatic as it curves south-



ward to divide the peninsula in its entire length into two not unequal parts. This failure of the mountains quite to reach the sea leaves at this corner a narrow strip of lowland, of marshy plain in fact, between them. Therefore the Romans, though they were compelled to cross the Apennines, for Rome

lay upon their western side, were able to do so where they chose and not of necessity to make the difficult passage at a crucial point.

The road they planned and laid out, the Flaminian Way, the great north road of the Romans, was built by Caius Flaminius the Censor about 220 B.C.,[1] that is to say, immediately after the first subjection of the Gauls south of the Po which had been largely his achievement, and for military and political business which that achievement entailed. This road ran from Rome directly to Ariminum (Rimini) and it crossed the Apennines near the modern Scheggia and by the great pass of the Furlo.[2]

The first act of the Romans after the defeat of Hannibal was the re-establishment of their fortresses at Placentia, Cremona, and Mutina (Modena), the second was the construction of a great highway which connected Placentia through Mutina with the Via Flaminia at Rimini. This was the work of the Consul Æmilius Lepidus in 187 B.C. and the road still bears his name.

It is obvious then that the command of the way from Italy into Cisalpine Gaul, or *vice versa*, lay in the hands of Rimini, and it is significant that the political boundary between them was here marked by a little river, the Rubicon, a few miles to the north of that city. The command which Rimini thus held was purely political; it passed from her to Ravenna automatically whenever that entry was threatened. Why?

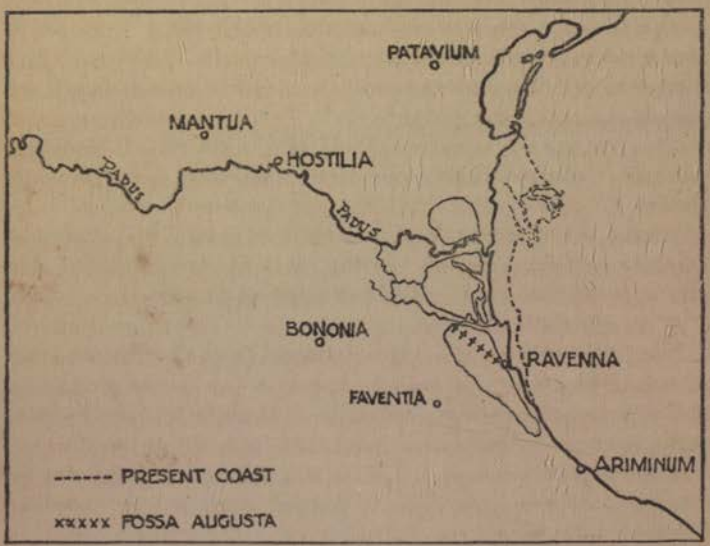
The answer is very simple: because Rimini could not easily be defended, while Ravenna was impregnable.

Ravenna stood from fifteen to eighteen miles north and east of the Æmilian Way and some thirty-one miles north and a little west of Rimini. Its extraordinary situation was almost unique in antiquity and is only matched by one city

[1] It is, of course, certain that a road was in existence long before; but not as a constructed, permanent, and military Way.

[2] The Furlo was to be held in the time of Aurelius Victor, if not of Vespasian, by the fortress of Petra Pertusa.

of later times—Venice. It was built as Venice is literally upon the waters. Strabo thus describes it: "Situated in the marshes is the great Ravenna, built entirely on piles, and traversed by canals which you cross by bridges or ferry-boats. At the full tides it is washed by a considerable quantity of sea water, as well as by the river, and thus the sewage is carried off and the air purified; in fact, the district is con-



sidered so salubrious that the (Roman) governors have selected it as a spot in which to bring up and exercise the gladiators. It is a remarkable peculiarity of this place that, though situated in the midst of a marsh, the air is perfectly innocuous." [1]

Ravenna must always have been impregnable to any save a modern army, so long as it was able to hold the road in and out and was not taken from the sea. The one account we

[1] Strabo, v. i. 7, tells us Altinum was similarly situated.

have of an attack upon it before the fall of the empire is given us by Appian and recounts a raid from the sea. It is but an incident in the civil wars of Marius and Sulla when Ravenna, we learn, was occupied for the latter by Metellus his lieutenant. In the year 82 B.C., says Appian, "Sulla overcame a detachment of his enemies near Saturnia, and Metellus sailed round toward Ravenna and took possession of the level wheat-growing country of Uritanus."

This impregnable city, the most southern of Cisalpine Gaul, immediately commanded the pass between Cisalpine Gaul and Italy directly that pass was threatened, and to this I say was due a good half of its fame. The rest must be equally divided between the fact that the city was impregnable, and therefore a secure refuge or *point d'appui*, and its situation upon the sea.

Strabo in his account of Ravenna, which I have quoted above, emphasises the fact rather of its situation among the marshes than of its position with regard to the sea. This is perhaps natural. The society to which he belonged (though indeed he was of Greek descent) loathed and feared the sea with an unappeasable horror. No journey was too long to make if thereby the sea passage might be avoided, no road too rough and rude if to take it was to escape the unstable winds and waters. That too was a part of Ravenna's strength. She was as much a city of the sea as Venice is; but of what a sea?

The Adriatic, upon whose western shore she stood at the gate of Italy and Cisalpine Gaul, was—and this partly because of the Roman horror of the sea—the fault between Greek and Latin, East and West. To this great fact she owes much of her later splendour, much of her unique importance in those centuries we call the Dark Age.

Even to-day as one stands upon the height of the republic of S. Marino and catches, faintly at dawn, the sunlight upon the Dalmatian hills, one instinctively feels it is the Orient one sees.

This, then, is the cause of the greatness, of the opportunity

for greatness, of Ravenna: her geographical position in regard to the peninsula of Italy, the Cisalpine plain, and the sea. Each of these exalt her in turn and all together give her the unique and almost fabulous position she holds in the history of Europe.

Because she held the gateway between Italy and the Cisalpine plain, Cæsar repaired to her when he was treating with the Senate for the consulship, and from her he set out to possess himself of all that great government.

Because she was impregnable, and held both the plain where the enemy must be met and the peninsula with Rome within it, Honorius retreated to her from Milan when Alaric crossed the Alps.

Because she was set upon the sea, and that sea was the fault between East and West, and because she held the key as it were of all Italy and through Italy of the West, Justinian there established his government when the great attempt was made by Byzantium to reconquer us from the barbarian.

"*Ravenna Felix*" we read on many an old coin of that time, and whatever we may think of that title or prophecy, which indeed might seem never to have come true for her, this at least we must acknowledge, that she was happy in her situation which offered such opportunities for greatness and so certain an immortality.

II

JULIUS CÆSAR IN RAVENNA

WHEN we first come upon Ravenna in the pages of Strabo, its origin is already obscured; but this at least seems certain, that it was never a Gaulish city. Strabo tells us that "Ravenna is reputed to have been founded by Thessalians, who, not being able to sustain the violence of the Tyrrheni, welcomed into their city some of the Umbri who still possess it, while they themselves returned home." [1] The Thessalians were probably Pelasgi, but apart from that Strabo's statement would seem to be reasonably accurate. At any rate he continually repeats it, for he goes on to tell us that "Ariminum (Rimini), like Ravenna, is an ancient colony of the Umbri, but both of them received also Roman colonies." Again, in the same book of his *Geography*, he tells us: "The Umbri lie between the country of the Sabini and the Tyrrheni, but extend beyond the mountains as far as Ariminum and Ravenna." And again he says: "Umbria lies along the eastern boundary of Tyrrhenia and beginning from the Apennines, or rather beyond these mountains (extends) as far as the Adriatic. For commencing from Ravenna the Umbri inhabit the neighbouring country . . . all allow that Umbria extends as far as Ravenna, as the inhabitants are Umbri."

We may take it, then, that when Rome annexed Ravenna it

[1] Strabo *ut supra.*

was a city of the Umbri, and we may dismiss Pliny's statement[1] that it was a Sabine city altogether for it is both improbable and inexplicable.

When Ravenna received a Roman colony we do not know, for though Strabo states this fact, he does not tell us when it occurred and we have no other means of knowing. All we can be reasonably sure of is that this Umbrian city on the verge of Cisalpine Gaul, hemmed in on the west by the Lingonian Gauls, received a Roman colony certainly not before 268 B.C. when Ariminum was occupied. The name of Ravenna, however, does not occur in history till a late period of the Roman republic, and the first incident in which we hear of Ravenna having any part occurs in 82 B.C., when, as I have already related, Metellus, the lieutenant of Sulla, landed there or thereabouts from his ships and seems to have made the city, already a place of some importance, the centre of his operations.

Ravenna really entered history—and surely gloriously enough—when Julius Cæsar chose it, the last great town of his command towards Italy, as his headquarters while he treated with the senate before he crossed the Rubicon.

"Cæsar," says Appian, "had lately recrossed the straits from Britain, and, after traversing the Gallic country along the Rhine, had passed the Alps with 5000 foot and 300 horse, and arrived at Ravenna which was contiguous to Italy and the last town in his government." This was in 50 B.C. The state of affairs which that act was meant to elucidate may be briefly stated as follows.

The Roman republic, still in the midst of the political, social, and ecomonic revolution whose first phase was the awful civil wars of Marius and Sulla, had long been at the mercy of Pompey the opportunist, Crassus the plutocrat, and Julius Cæsar—the first Triumvirate. Crassus had always leaned towards Cæsar and the *entente* between Cæsar and Pompey had been strengthened by the marriage of the latter

[1] Pliny, iii. 15; v. 20.

with Cæsar's daughter Julia, who was to die in the midst of the crisis 54 B.C. In 58 B.C., the year following this marriage, Cæsar went to take up his great command in the Gauls, but Pompey remained in Rome, where every day his influence and popularity were failing while the astonishing successes of Cæsar made him the idol of the populace. In 55 B.C. Pompey was consul for the second time with Crassus. He received as his provinces the two Spains, but he governed them by his legates and remained in the neighbourhood of the City. Crassus received the province of Syria, and the appalling disasters of the Parthian war, in which he most miserably lost life and honour, seemed to give Pompey the opportunity for which he had long been waiting. He encouraged the growing civil discord which was tearing the state in pieces, and with such success that the senate was compelled to call for his assistance. In 52 B.C. he became sole consul, restored order, and placed himself at the head of the aristocratic party which he had deserted to become the great popular hero when he was consul with Crassus in 70 B.C.

Now Cæsar had long watched the astonishing actions of Pompey, and had no intention of leaving the fate of the republic to him and the aristocracy. He does not seem to have wished to break altogether with Pompey, but only to hold him in check. At his meeting with Pompey at Luca (Lucca) in 56 B.C. he had been promised the consulship for 48 B.C. when his governorship came to an end, and he now determined to insure the fulfilment of this promise which would place him upon a legal equality with his rival. For the rest he knew that he was as superior to Pompey as a statesman as he was as a soldier, and he did not apparently anticipate any difficulty in out-manœuvring him in the senate and in the forum. Cæsar, then, claimed no more than an equality with Pompey and the fulfilment of his promise; but these he determined to have. All through the winter of 52-51 B.C. he was arming. Well served by his friends, among whom were Mark Antony and Curio the tribunes, in 50 B.C., "having gone

the circuit for the administration of justice," as Suetonius tells us, " he made a halt at Ravenna resolved to have recourse to arms if the senate should proceed to extremity against the tribunes of the people, who had espoused his cause." But first he determined for many reasons to send ambassadors to Rome, to request the fulfilment of the promise made to him at Luca. Pompey, who was not yet at open enmity with him, determined, although he had made the promise, neither to aid him by his influence nor openly to oppose him on this occasion. But the consuls Lentulus and Marcellus, who had always been his enemies, resolved to use all means in their power to prevent him gaining his object.

At this juncture Caius Curio, tribune of the people, came to Cæsar in Ravenna. Curio had made many energetic struggles in behalf of the republic and Cæsar's cause; but at last, when he perceived that all his efforts were in vain, he fled through fear of his enemies and Cæsar's to Ravenna and told Cæsar all that had taken place; and, seeing that war was openly being prepared against Cæsar, advised him to bring up his army and to rescue the republic.

Now Cæsar was not ignorant of the real state of affairs, but he was perhaps not yet ready to act, or he hoped in fact to save the ancient state; at any rate, he gave it as his opinion that particular regard should be had to the tranquillity of the republic, lest any one should assert that he was the originator of civil war. Therefore he sent again to his friends, making through them this very moderate request, that two legions and the provinces of Cisalpine Gaul and Illyricum should be left him. No one could openly quarrel with such a reasonable demand and the patience with which it was more than once put forward; for when Cæsar could not obtain a favourable answer from the consuls, he wrote a letter to the senate in which he briefly recounted his exploits and public services, and entreated that he should not be deprived of the favour of the people who had ordered that he, although absent, should be considered a candidate for the consulship at the next election.

He stated also that he would disband his army if the senate and the Roman people desired it, provided that Pompey would do the same. But he stated also that, as long as Pompey retained the command of his army, there could be no just reason why Cæsar should disband his troops and expose himself to the power of his enemies.

This was Cæsar's third offer to his opponents. He entrusted the letter to Curio, who travelled one hundred and sixty miles in three days and reached the City early in January. He did not, however, deliver the letter until there was a crowded meeting of the senate and the tribunes of the people were present; for he was afraid lest, if he gave it up without the utmost publicity, the consuls would suppress it. A sort of debate followed the reading of the letter, but when Scipio, Pompey's mouthpiece, spoke and declared, among other things, that Pompey was resolved to take up the cause of the senate now or never, and that he would drop it if a decision were delayed, the majority, overawed, decreed that Cæsar should "at a definite and not distant day give up Transalpine Gaul to Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus, and Cisalpine Gaul to Marcus Servilius Nonianus and should dismiss his army, failing which he should be esteemed a traitor. When the tribunes, of Cæsar's party, made use of their right of veto against this resolution not only were they, as they at least asserted, threatened in the senate house itself by the swords of Pompeian soldiers and forced, in order to save their lives, to flee in slaves' clothing from the capital, but the senate, now sufficiently overawed, treated their interference as an attempt at revolution, declared the country in danger, and in the usual form called the burgesses to take up arms, and all the magistrates faithful to the constitution to place themselves at the head of the armed."

That was on January 7th. Five days later Cæsar was on his way at the head of his troops to invade Italy and, without knowing it, to found the empire, that universal government out of which we are come.

It was with one legion[1] that Cæsar undertook his great adventure. That legion, the Thirteenth, had been stationed near Tergeste (Trieste), but at Cæsar's orders it had marched into Ravenna in the first days of January. Upon the fateful twelfth, with some secrecy, while Cæsar himself attended a public spectacle, examined the model of a fencing school, which he proposed to build, and, as usual, sat down to table with a numerous party of friends,[2] the first companies of this legion left Ravenna by the Rimini gate, to be followed after sunset by its great commander; still with all possible secrecy it seems, for mules were put to his carriage, a hired one, at a mill outside Ravenna and he went almost alone.

The road he travelled was not the great way to Rimini, but a by-way across the marshes, and it would seem to have been in a wretched state. At any rate Cæsar lost his way, the lights of his little company were extinguished, his carriage had to be abandoned, and it was only after wandering about for a long time that, with the help of a peasant whom he found towards daybreak, he was able to get on, afoot now, and at last to reach the great highway. That night must have tried even the iron nerves and dauntless courage of the greatest soldier of all time.

Cæsar came up with his troops on the banks of the Rubicon, the sacred boundary of Italy and Cisalpine Gaul in the narrow pass between the mountains and the sea. "There," says Suetonius, whose account I have followed, "he halted for a while revolving in his mind the importance of the step he was about to take. At last turning to those about him, he said:

[1] Plutarch says: "Cæsar had not then with him more than 300 horse and 5000 foot. The rest of his forces were left on the other side of the Alps."

[2] So Suetonius; but Plutarch says: "As for himself, he spent the day at a public show of gladiators; and a little before evening bathed, and then went into the apartment, where he entertained company. When it was growing dark, he left the company, having desired them to make merry till his return, which they would not have long to wait for."

'We may still retreat; but if we pass this little bridge nothing is left us but to fight it out in arms.'"

Now while he was thus hesitating, staggered, even he, by the greatness of what he would attempt, doubtless resolving in silence arguments for and against it, and, if we may believe Plutarch, "many times changing his opinion," the following strange incident is said to have happened.

A person, remarkable, says Suetonius, for his noble aspect and graceful mien, appeared close at hand sitting by the wayside playing upon a pipe. When not only the shepherds herding their flocks thereabout, but a number of the legionaries also gathered round to hear this fellow play, and there happened to be among them some trumpeters, the piper suddenly snatched a trumpet from one of these, ran to the river, and, sounding the advance with a piercing blast, crossed to the other side. Upon which Cæsar on a sudden impulse exclaimed: "Let us go whither the omens of the gods and the iniquity of our enemies call us. The die is cast." And immediately at the head of his troops he crossed the river and found awaiting him the tribunes of the people who, having fled from Rome, had come to meet him. There in their presence he called upon the troops to pledge him their fidelity, with tears in his eyes, Suetonius assures us, and his garments rent from his bosom. And when he had received their oath he set out, and with his legion marched so fast the rest of the way that he reached Ariminum before morning and took it.

The fall of Ariminum was but a presage, as we know, of Cæsar's triumph. In three months he was master of all Italy. From Ravenna he had emerged to seize the lordship of the world, and out of a misery of chaos to create Europe.

III

RAVENNA IN THE TIME OF THE EMPIRE

THAT great revolutionary act of Julius Cæsar's may be said to have made manifest, and for the first time, the unique position of Ravenna in relation to Italy and Cisalpine Gaul. In the years which followed, that position remained always unchanged, and is, indeed, more prominent than ever in the civil wars between Antony and Octavianus which followed Cæsar's murder; but with the establishment of the empire by Octavianus and the universal peace, the *pax romana*, which it ensured, this position of Ravenna in relation to Italy and to Cisalpine Gaul sank into insignificance in comparison with her other unique advantage, her position upon the sea. For Octavianus, as we shall see, established her as the great naval port of Italy upon the east, and as such she chiefly appears to us during all the years of the unhampered government of the empire.

In the civil wars between Antony and Octavianus, however, she appears still as the key to the narrow pass between Italy and Cisalpine Gaul. Let us consider this for a moment.

Antony, as we know, after that great scene in the senate house when the supporters of Pompey and the aristocrats had succeeded in denying Cæsar everything, had fled to Cæsar at Ravenna. In the war which followed he had been Cæsar's chief lieutenant and friend. At the crucial battle of Pharsalus in 48 B.C. he had commanded, and with great success, the left wing. In 44 B.C. he had been consul with Cæsar and had then

offered him the crown at the festival of the *Lupercalia*. After Cæsar's murder he had attempted, and not without a sort of right, to succeed to his power. It was he who pronounced the speech over Cæsar's body and read his will to the people. It was he who obtained Cæsar's papers and his private property. It cannot then have been without resentment and surprise that he found presently a rival in the young Octavianus, the great-nephew and adopted son of the dictator, who joined the senate with the express purpose of crushing him.

Now Antony, perhaps remembering his master, had obtained from the senate the promise of Cisalpine Gaul, then in the hands of Decimus Brutus, who, encouraged by Octavianus, refused to surrender it to him. Antony proceeded to Ariminum (Rimini), but Octavianus seized Ravenna and supplied it both with stores and money.[1] Antony was beaten and compelled to retreat across the Alps. In these acts we may see which of the two rivals understood the reality of things, and from this alone we might perhaps foresee the victor.

That was in 44 B.C. A reconciliation between the rivals followed and the government was vested in them and in Lepidus under the title of *Triumviri Reipublicæ Constituendæ* for five years. In 42 B.C. Brutus and Cassius and the aristocratic party were crushed by Antony and Octavianus at Philippi; and Antony received Asia as his share of the Roman world. Proceeding to his government in Cilicia, Antony met Cleopatra and followed her to Egypt. Meanwhile Fulvia, his wife, and L. Antonius, his brother, made war upon Octavianus in Italy, for they like Antony hoped for the lordship of the world. In the war which followed, Ravenna played a considerable part. In 41 B.C., for instance, the year in which the war opened, the Antonine party secured themselves in Ravenna, not only because of its strategical importance in regard to Italy and Cisalpine Gaul, but also because as a seaport it

[1] Appian, iii. 42.

allowed of their communication with Antony in Egypt from whom they expected support. All this exposed and demonstrated more and more the importance of Ravenna, and we may be sure that the wise and astute Octavianus marked it.

But it was the war with Sextus Pompeius which clearly showed what the future of Ravenna was to be. In that affair we find Ravenna already established as a naval port apparently subsidiary, on that coast, to Brundusium, as Misenum was upon the Tyrrhene sea to Puteoli; and there Octavianus built ships.

It was not, however, till Octavianus, his enemies one and all disposed of, had made himself emperor at last, that, on the establishment and general regulation of his great government, he chose Ravenna as the major naval port of Italy upon the east, even as he chose Misenum upon the west.

Octavianus had learned two things, certainly, in the wars he had fought to establish himself in the monarchy his great-uncle had founded. He had learned the necessity and the value of sea power, and he had understood the unique position of Ravenna in relation to the East and the West. That he had been able to appreciate both these facts is enough to mark him as the great man he was.

Julius Cæsar, for all his mighty grasp of reality, had not perceived the enormous value, nay the necessity, of sea power, and because of this failure his career had been twice nearly cut short; at Ilerda, where the naval victory of Decimus Brutus over the Massiliots alone saved him; and at Alexandria. Both the liberators and Antony had possessed ships; but both had failed to use them with any real effect. It was Sextus Pompeius who forced Octavianus to turn to the sea, and when Octavianus became Augustus he did not forget the lesson. Sole master of the Mediterranean and of all its ships of war, he understood at once how great a support sea power offered him and his principate. Nor was the empire, while it was vigorous, though always fearful of and averse from the sea, ever to forget the power that lay in that command.

Thus it was that among the first acts of Augustus was the establishment of two fleets, as we might say, "in being" in the Mediterranean; the fleet of Misenum and the fleet of Ravenna; the latter with stations probably at Aquileia, Brundusium, the Piræus, and probably elsewhere.

The fleet of Ravenna was, certainly after A.D. 70, probably about A.D. 127, entitled *Prætoria*. The origin of this title is unknown, but it was also borne by the fleet of Misenum and it distinguishes the Italian from the later Provincial fleets, the former being in closer relation to the emperor, just as the Prætorian cohorts were distinguished from the legions.

The emperor was, of course, head of all the fleets, which were, each of them, commanded by a prefect and sub-prefect appointed by him; and if we may judge from the recorded promotions we have, it would seem that the Misenate prefect ranked before the Ravennate and both before the Provincial. But in the general military system the navy stood lowest in respect of pay and position. The fleets were manned by freed men and foreigners who could not obtain citizenship until after twenty-six years' service. We find Claudius employing the marines of the *Classis Ravennas* to drain lake Fucinus, and it was probably Vespasian who formed the Legion II. *Adjutrix* from the Ravennate, even as Nero had formed Legion I. *Adjutrix* from the Misenate marines.

The Ravenna that Augustus thus chose to be the great base and port of his fleet in the eastern sea was, as we have seen, a place built upon piles in the midst of the marshes, impregnable from the land, and, because impregnable, able, whenever it was in dispute, to command the narrow pass between the mountains and the sea that was the gate of Italy and Cisalpine Gaul. Such a place, situated as it was upon the western shore of that sea which was the fault between East and West, was eminently suitable for the great purpose of the emperor. Pliny[1] indeed would seem to tell us that

[1] Pliny, iii. 20; cf. also Strabo, v. 7.

from time immemorial Ravenna had possessed a small port; but such a place, well enough for the small traders of those days, could not serve usefully the requirements of a great fleet. Therefore the first act of Augustus, when he had chosen Ravenna as his naval base, was the construction of a proper port and harbour, and these came to be named, after the fleet they served and accommodated, Classis. Classis was situated some two and a half miles from the town of Ravenna to the east-south-east. We may perhaps have some idea both of its situation and of its relation to Ravenna if we say that it was to that city what the Porto di Lido is to Venice.

It is very difficult, in looking upon Ravenna as we see it to-day, to reconstruct it, even in the imagination, as it was when Augustus had done with it. To begin with, the sea has retreated several miles from the city, which is no longer within sight of it, while all that is left of Classis, which is also now out of sight of the sea, is a single decayed and deserted church, S. Apollinare in Classe. Strabo, however, who wrote his *Geography* a few years after Augustus had chosen Ravenna for his port upon the Adriatic, has left us a description both of it and the country in which it stood, from which must be drawn any picture we would possess of so changed a place. He speaks of it, as we have seen, as "a great city" situated in the marshes, built entirely upon piles, and traversed by canals which were everywhere crossed by bridges or ferry-boats. While at the full tide he tells us it was swept by the sea and always by the river, and thus the sewage was carried off and the air purified, and this so thoroughly, that even before its establishment by Augustus the district was considered so healthy that the Roman governors had chosen it as a spot in which to train gladiators.[1] That river we know from Pliny[2] was called the Bedesis; and the same writer tells us that Augustus built a canal which brought the water of the Po to Ravenna.

Tacitus in his *Annals*[3] merely tells us that Italy was

[1] Strabo, v. 7. [2] Pliny, iii. 20. [3] Tacitus, *Ann.* iv. 5.

guarded on both sides by fleets at Misenum and Ravenna, and in his *Histories* [1] speaks of these places as the well known naval stations without stopping to describe them. While Suetonius,[2] though he mentions the great achievement of Augustus, does not emphasise it and does not attempt to tell us what these ports were like.

Perhaps the best description we have of Augustan Ravenna comes to us from a writer who certainly never saw the port in its great Roman days, but who probably followed a well established tradition in his description of it. This is Jornandes, who was born about A.D. 500 and was first a notary at the Ostrogothic court and later became a monk and finally bishop of Crotona. In his *De Getarum Origine et Rebus Gestis* he thus describes Ravenna:

"This city (says he) between the marshes, the sea, and the Po is only accessible on one side. Situated beside the Ionian Sea it is surrounded and almost submerged by lagoons. On the east is the sea, on the west it is defended by marshes across which there remains a narrow passage, a kind of gate. The city is encircled on the north by a branch of the Po, called the Fossa Asconis, and on the south by the Po itself, which is called the Eridanus, and which is there known as the King of Rivers. Augustus deepened its bed and made it larger; it flowed quite through the city, and its mouth formed an excellent port where once, as Dion reports [this passage of Dion Cassius is lost], a fleet of 250 ships could be stationed in all security. . . . The city has three names with which she glorifies herself and she is divided into three parts to which they correspond; the first is Ravenna, the last Classis, that in the midst is Cæsarea between Ravenna and the sea. Built on a sandy soil this quarter is easily approached and is commodiously situated for trade and transport."

We thus have a picture of Ravenna as a triune city, consisting of Ravenna proper, the port Classis, and the long suburb between them, Cæsarea, connected by a great causeway

[1] Tacitus, *Hist.* ii. 100; iii. 6, 40. [2] Suetonius, *Augustus.*

and everywhere watered by canals, the greatest of which was the Fossa Augusta by which a part of the waters of the Po were carried to Ravenna and thence to Classis and the sea; a city very much, we may suppose, what we know Venice to be, if we think of her in connection with the Riva, the great suburb of the Marina, and the Porto di Lido. At Classis we must understand there was room for a fleet of two hundred and fifty ships and accommodation for arsenals, magazines, barracks, and so forth, while there is one other thing we know of this port, and that from Pliny,[1] who tells us that it had a Pharos like the famous one of Alexandria. "There is another building (says he) that is highly celebrated, the tower that was built by a king of Egypt on the island of Pharos at the entrance to the harbour of Alexandria. . . . At present there are similar fires lighted up in numerous places, Ostia and Ravenna for example. The only danger is that when these fires are thus kept burning without intermission they may be mistaken for stars."

Such was the splendour of Ravenna in the time of Augustus. His achievement so far as Ravenna was concerned was to understand her importance not only in regard to Italy and Cisalpine Gaul, an importance already discounted by the universal peace he had established, but in regard to the sea. He turned Ravenna into a first-class naval port and based his eastern fleet upon her; and this was so wise an act that, so long as the empire remained strong and unhampered, Ravenna appears as the great base of its sea power in the East.

In that long peace which Italy enjoyed under the empire we hear little of Ravenna. We know Claudius built a great gate called Porta Aurea, which was only destroyed in 1582; and we know that the great sea port had one weakness, the scarcity of good water for drinking purposes. Martial writes

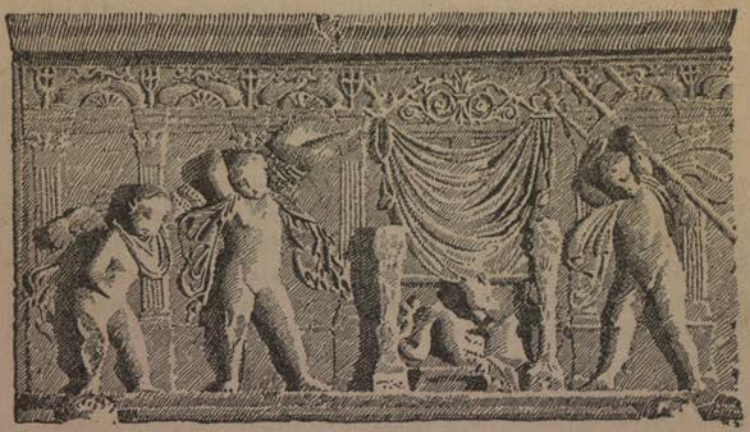
> "I'd rather at Ravenna have a cistern than a vine,
> Since I could sell my water there much better than my wine;"

[1] Pliny, xxx. vi. 18.

and again:

> "That landlord at Ravenna is plainly but a cheat,
> I paid for wine and water, but he served wine to me neat." [1]

This weakness would seem, however, to have been overcome by Trajan, who built an aqueduct nearly twenty miles long, which Theodoric restored, after the fall of the empire, in 524. This aqueduct, of which some arches remain in the bed of the



GREEK RELIEF FROM A TEMPLE OF NEPTUNE

Bedesis (Ronco), seems to have run, following the course of the river, from near Forlì, where there still remains a village called S. Maria in Acquedotto, to Ravenna.

The great city-port thus became one of the most important and considerable of the cities of Italy, at a time when the whole of the West was rapidly increasing in wealth and population, and especially the old province of Cisapline Gaul, which had indeed become, during the *pax romana*, the richest part of the new Italy. Always an important military port it was often occupied by the emperors as their head-

[1] Martial, *Ep.* iii. 56, 57. Trs. Hodgkin.

quarters from which to watch and to oppose the advance of their enemies into Italy, and the possessor of it, for the reasons I have set forth, was always in a commanding position. Thus in A.D. 193 it was the surrender of Ravenna without resistance that gave the empire to Septimius Severus, when, scarcely allowing himself time for sleep or food, marching on foot and in complete armour, he crossed the Alps at the head of his columns to punish the wretched Didius Julianus and to avenge Pertinax. It was there in 238 that Pupienus was busy assembling his army to oppose Maximin when he received the news of the death of his enemy before Aquileia.

And because it was impregnable and secluded it was often chosen too as a place of imprisonment for important prisoners.

It is true that we know very little, in detail, of the life of any city other than Rome during those years of the great Peace in which we see the empire change from a Pagan to a Christian state. Those centuries which saw Christendom slowly emerge, in which Europe was founded, still lack a modern historian, and the magnitude and splendour of their achievement are too generally misconceived or ignored. We are largely unaware still of what they were in themselves and of what we owe to them. By reason of the miserable collapse of Europe, of Christendom, in the sixteenth century and its appalling results both in thought and in politics, we are led, too often by prejudices, to regard those mighty years rather as the prelude to the decline and fall of the empire than as the great and indestructible foundations of all that is still worth having in the world.

For rightly understood those centuries gave us not only our culture, our civilisation, and our Faith, but ensured them to us that they should always endure. They established for ever the great lines upon which our art was to develop, to change, and yet not to suffer annihilation or barrenness. They established the supremacy of the idea, so that it might always renew our lives, our culture, and our polity, and that

we might judge everything by it and fear neither revolution, defeat, nor decay. They, and they alone, established us in the secure possession of our own souls so that we alone in the world might develop from within, to change but never to die, and to be—yes, alone in the world—Christians.

The almost incredible strength and well being of those years must be seized also. There was not a town in Italy and the West that did not expand and increase in a fashion almost miraculous during that period. It was then the rivers were embanked, the canals made, the great roads planned and constructed, and our communications established for ever. There was no industry that did not grow marvellously in strength, there is not a class that did not increase in wealth and well-being beyond our dreams of progress. There is scarcely anything that is really fundamental in our lives that was not then created that it might endure. It was then our religion, the soul of Europe, was born.

Christianity, the Faith, which, little by little, absorbed the empire, till it became the energy and the cause of all that undying but changeful principle of life and freedom which rightly understood is Europe, is thought to have been brought first to Ravenna by S. Apollinaris, a disciple as we are told of S. Peter, who made him her first bishop. So at least his acts assert; and though little credence may, I fear, be placed in them, that he was the first bishop of Ravenna, and in the time of S. Peter, is not at variance with what we know of that age, is attested by the traditions of the city, and is supported by later authorities. S. Peter Chrysologus (*c.* 440), the most famous of his successors, for instance, assures us of it. This great churchman calls S. Apollinaris martyr, and in that there is nothing strange, but he asserts that though he often spilt his blood for the Faith, yet God preserved him a long time, not less than twenty years, to his church, and that his persecution did not take away his life.[1]

[1] His relics lay for many years in the church dedicated in his honour at Classis; but in 549 they were removed from their great tomb and

The empire which it had taken more than a millenium to build, which was the most noble and perhaps the most beneficient experiment in government that has ever been made, was in obvious economic and administrative decay by the middle of the fourth century. Christianity perhaps was already undermining the servile state, which in its effort of self-preservation adopted an economic system hopelessly at variance with the facts of the situation; while the weakness of its frontiers offered a military problem which the empire was unable to face. Diocletian had attempted to solve it by dividing the empire, but the division he made was rather racial that strategic, for under it the two parts of the empire, East and West, met on the Danube. The eastern part, by force of geography, was inclined to an Asiatic point of view and to the neglect of the Danube; the western was by no means strong enough either financially or militarily to hold that tremendous line.

We read, in the letters of S. Ambrose among others, of the decay of the great cities of Cisalpine Gaul,[1] of the failure of agriculture in that rich countryside, of the poverty and misery that were everywhere falling upon that great state. It is possible that in the general weakening of administrative power even the roads, the canals, the whole system of communications were allowed to become less perfect than they had been; everywhere there was a retreat. The frontiers were no longer inviolate, and it is probable that in the general decay the port of Classis, the city of Ravenna, suffered not less than their neighbours.

Indeed already in 306 it is rather as a refuge than as a

placed in a more secret spot in the same church. Cf. Agnellus: *Liber Pontificalis Ecclesiæ Ravennatis* (Ed. Holder-Egger in *Monumenta Germanicæ Historica*) and S. Peter Chrysologus, Sermon 128 in Migne.

[1] See S. Ambrose, *Ep.* 39, written in 388, quoted by Muratori, *Dissertazioni*, vol. i. 21. "De Bononiensi veniens Urbe, a tergo Claternam, ipsam Bononiam, Mutinam, Regium derelinquebas; in dextera erat Brixillum; a fronte occurrebat Placentia. . . . Te igitur semirutarum Urbium cadavera, terrarumque sub eodem conspectu exposita funera non te admonent. . . ."

great and active naval base that Ravenna appears to us, when Severus, destitute of force, "retired or rather fled" thither from the pursuit of Maximian. He flung himself into Ravenna because it was impregnable and because he expected reinforcements from Illyricum and the East, but though he held the sea with a powerful fleet he made no use of it, and the emissaries of Maximian easily persuaded him to surrender. Already perhaps, a century later, when Honorius retired from Milan on the approach of Alaric and the first of those barbarian invasions which broke up the decaying western empire had penetrated into Cisalpine Gaul, the great works of Augustus and Trajan at Ravenna, the canals, the mighty *Fossa*, and the port itself had fallen into a sort of decay which the fifth century was to complete, till that marvellous city, once the base of the eastern fleet and one of the great naval ports of the world, became just a decaying citadel engulfed in the marshes, impregnable it is true, but for barbarian reasons, lost in the fogs and the miasma of her shallow and undredged lagoons.

IV

THE RETREAT UPON RAVENNA

HONORIUS AND GALLA PLACIDIA

WHEN Honorius left Milan on the approach of Alaric he went to Ravenna. Why?

Gibbon, whom every writer since has followed without question, tells us, in one of his most scornful passages, that "the emperor Honorius was distinguished, above his subjects, by the pre-eminence of fear, as well as of rank. The pride and luxury in which he was educated had not allowed him to suspect that there existed on the earth any power presumptuous enough to invade the repose of the successor of Augustus. The acts of flattery concealed the impending danger till Alaric approached the palace of Milan. But when the sound of war had awakened the young emperor, instead of flying to arms with the spirit, or even the rashness, of his age, he eagerly listened to those timid counsellors who proposed to convey his sacred person and his faithful attendants to some secure and distant station in the provinces of Gaul. . . . The recent danger to which the person of the emperor had been exposed in the defenceless palace of Milan urged him to seek a retreat in some inaccessible fortress of Italy, where he might securely remain while the open country was covered by a deluge of barbarians."

No historian of Ravenna, and certainly no writer upon the fall of the empire, has cared to understand what Ravenna

was. Gibbon complains that he lacks "a local antiquarian and a good topographical map;" yet it is not so much the lack of local knowledge that leads him unreservedly to censure Honorius for his retreat upon Ravenna, as the fact that he has not perhaps really grasped what Ravenna was, what was her relation to Italy and Cisalpine Gaul, and especially how she stood to the sea, and what part that sea played in the geography and strategy of the empire.

For my part I shall maintain that, whatever may be the truth as to the private character of Honorius, which would indeed be difficult to defend, he was wisely advised by those counsellors who conceived his retreat from Milan to Ravenna; that this retreat was not a mere flight, but a consummate and well thought out strategical and political move, and that any other would have been for the worse and would probably have involved the West in an utter destruction.

Cisalpine Gaul, at this crisis, as always both before and since, was the great and proper defence of Italy; not the Alps nor the Apennines but Cisalpine Gaul broke the barbarians, and, in so far as it could be materially saved, saved Italy and our civilisation, of which Rome was the soul. There Stilicho met Alaric and broke his first and worst enthusiasm; there Leo the Great turned back Attila; there the fiercest terror of the Lombard tide spent itself.

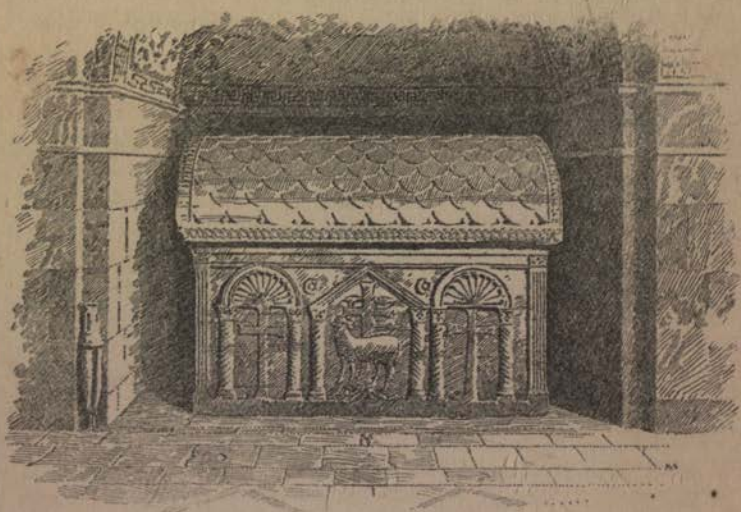
Now, as we have seen, Cisalpine Gaul, in its relation to Italy, was best held and contained from Ravenna, which commanded, whenever it was in danger, the narrow pass between them. Therefore the retreat of Honorius upon Ravenna was a consummate strategical act, well advised and such as we might expect from "the successor of Augustus." Its results were momentous and entirely fortunate for Italy, and indeed, when the truth about Ravenna is once grasped, any other move would appear to have been craven and ridiculous.

But there is something more that is of an even greater importance.

The best hope of the West in its fight with the barbarian

undoubtedly lay in its own virility and arms, but it had the right to expect that in such a fight it would not be unaided by the eastern empire and the great civilisation whose capital was that New Rome upon the Bosphorus. If it was to receive such assistance, it must receive it at Ravenna, which held Cisalpine Gaul and was the gate of the eastern sea.

When Honorius then retreated upon Ravenna, he did so,



SARCOPHAGUS OF EMPEROR HONORIUS (?)

not merely because Ravenna was impregnable, though that of course weighed too with his advisers, for the base of any virile and active defence must, or should, be itself secure; but also because it held the great pass and the great road into Italy, and as the eastern gate of the West would receive and thrust forward whatever help and reinforcement the empire in the East might care or be able to give.

That the defence which was made with Ravenna for its citadel was not wholly victorious, that the attack which the

eastern empire planned and delivered from Ravenna, perhaps too late, was not completely successful, were the results of many and various causes, but not of any want of judgment in the choice of Ravenna as their base. That base was rightly and consummately chosen without hesitation and from the first; and because it was chosen, the hope of the restoration never quite passed away and seemed to have been realised at last when Charlemagne, following Pepin into Italy, was crowned emperor in S. Peter's Church on Christmas Day in the year 800.

It will readily be understood, then, that the most important and the most interesting part of the history of Ravenna begins when Honorius retreated upon her before the invasion of Alaric, and not only the West, but Italy and Rome, the heart and soul of it, seemed about to be in dispute.

But first amid all the loose thought and confusion of the last three hundred years let us make sure of fundamentals.

I shall take for granted in this book that Rome accepted the Faith not because the Roman mind was senile, but because it was mature; that the failure of the empire is to be regretted; that the barbarians were barbarians; that not from them but from the new and Christian civilisation of the empire itself came the strength of the restoration, the mighty achievements of the Middle Age, of the Renaissance, of the Modern world. The barbarian, as I understand it, did nothing. He came in naked and ashamed, without laws or institutions. To some extent, though even in this he was a failure, he destroyed; it was his one service. He came and he tried to learn; he learnt to be a Christian. When the empire re-arose it was Roman not barbarian, it was Christian not heathen, it was Catholic not heretical. It owed the barbarian nothing. That it re-arose, and that as a Roman and a Catholic state, is due largely to the fact that Honorius retreated upon Ravenna.

If we could depend upon the dates in the Theodosian Code we should be able to say that Honorius finally retreated upon

Ravenna before December 402;[1] unhappily the dates we find there must not be relied upon with absolute confidence. We may take it that Alaric entered Venetia in November 401, and that at the same time Radagaisus invaded Rhætia. Stilicho, Honorius' great general and the hero of the whole defence, advanced against Radagaisus. Upon Easter Day in the following year, however, he met Alaric at Pollentia and defeated him, but the Gothic king was allowed to withdraw from that field with the greater part of his cavalry entire and unbroken. Stilicho hoping to annihilate him forced him to retreat, overtook him at Asta (Asti), but again allowed him to escape and this time to retreat into Istria.

In the summer of 403 Alaric again entered Italy and laid siege to Verona; Stilicho, however, met him and defeated him, but again allowed him to retreat. Well might Orosius, his contemporary, exclaim that this king with his Goths, though often hemmed in, often defeated, was always allowed to escape.

The battle of Verona was followed by a peace of two years duration. But in 405 the other barbarian Radagaisus came down into Cisalpine Gaul as Alaric had done, and Stilicho, knowing that the pass through which the great road entered Italy was secured by Ravenna, assailed him at Ticinum (Pavia). Radagaisus, however, did a bold and perhaps an unexpected thing. He attempted to cross the Apennines themselves by the difficult and neglected route that ran over them and led to Fiesole.[2] But the Romans had been right in their judgment. That way was barred by nature. It needed no defence. Before the barbarian had quite pierced the mountains Stilicho caught him, slew him,

[1] Cf. Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, vol. i. pt. 2, p. 712.

[2] Livy asserts that C. Flaminius, the colleague of M. Æmilius Lepidus in B.C. 187, built a road direct from Arezzo to Bologna across the Tuscan Apennines. This road early fell into disuse and ruin. We hear nothing of it (but see Cicero, *Phil.* xii. 9) till this raid of Radagaisus. Later, Totila came this way to besiege Rome. Cf. Repetti, *Dizionario della Toscana*, vol. v. 713-715.

and annihilated his already starving bands at Fiesole. Cisalpine Gaul and the fortress of Ravenna, its key, still held Italy secure.

Honorius and his great general and minister now essayed what perhaps should have been attempted earlier, namely, to employ Alaric in the service of Rome, as the East had known how to employ him, at a distance from the capital. He was first offered the province of Illyricum; but the senate refused to hear of any such treaty, and though at last it consented to pay the Goth 4000 pounds in gold "to secure the peace of Italy and conciliate the friendship of the Gothic king," Lampadius, one of the most illustrious members of that assembly, asserted that "this is not a treaty of peace but of servitude." Thus the senate was alienated from Stilicho, and not the senate only but the army also, which was exasperated by his affection for the barbarians. Nor was the great general more fortunate with the emperor, who had come of late under the influence of Olympius, a man who, Zosimus tells us, under an appearance of Christian piety, concealed a great deal of rascality. Stilicho had promoted him to a very honourable place in the household of the emperor; nevertheless he plotted against him. At his suggestion Honorius proposed to show himself to the army at Pavia, already at enmity with Stilicho. The result was disastrous. For the occasion was seized for a revolt in which the best officers of the empire perished. Stilicho, not daring to march his barbarians from Bologna upon the Roman army, and by this refusal incurring their enmity also, flung himself into Ravenna and took refuge in the great church there. On the following day, however, he was delivered up by the bishop to Count Heraclian and slain.

Thus perished in the great fortress of the defence the great defender, leaving the whole of Italy in confusion. He was not long to go unavenged.

Stilicho was slain in Ravenna upon August 23rd, 408. In October of that year Alaric, who had watched the appalling revolution that followed his own defeat and the annihilation

of Radagaisus, after fruitless negotiations with Honorius, descended into Italy, passed Aquileia, and coming into the Æmilian Way at Bologna found the pass open and without misadventure entered Italy at Rimini, and, without attacking Ravenna, marched on "to Rome, to make that city desolate." He besieged Rome three times and pillaged it, taking with him, when he left it, hostages. As we know he never returned, but died at Cosentia in southern Italy, and was buried in the bed of the Buxentius, which had been turned aside, for a moment, by a captive multitude, to give him sepulture.

Among those hostages which Alaric had claimed from the City and taken with him southward was the sister of the two emperors, the daughter of the great Theodosius, Galla Placidia.

This great lady had been born, as is thought, in Rome about 390; she had, however, spent the first seven years of her life in Constantinople, but had returned to Italy on the death of Theodosius with her brother Honorius, in the care of the beautiful Serena, the wife of Stilicho. She does not seem to have followed her brother either to Milan or to Ravenna, for indeed his residence in both these cities was part of the great defence. She remained in Rome, probably in the house of her kinswoman Læta, the widow of Gratian. That she had a grudge against Serena seems certain, though the whole story of the plot to marry her to Eucherius, Serena's son, would appear doubtful. That she initiated her murder, as Zosimus[1] asserts, is extremely improbable and altogether unproven. However that may be, after one of his three sieges of Rome, Alaric carried Galla Placidia off as a hostage. He seems, according to Zosimus, to have treated her with courtesy and even with an exaggerated reverence, as the sister of the emperor and the daughter of Theodosius, but she was compelled to follow in his train and to see the ruin of Lucania and

[1] Zosimus, v. 38. Zosimus was a pagan. Placidia was a devout and enthusiastic Catholic.

S. AGATA.

Calabria. For, as a matter of fact and reality, Galla Placidia was the one hope of the Goths and this became obvious after the death of Alaric.

The Gothic army was in a sort of trap; it could not return without the consent of Ravenna, and if it were compelled to remain in Italy it was only a question of time till it should be crushed or gradually wasted away. It is probable that Alaric was aware of this; it is certain that it was well appreciated by his successor Ataulfus. He saw that his one chance of coming to terms with the empire lay in his possession of Galla Placidia. Moreover, Italy and Rome had worked in the mind and the spirit of this man the extraordinary change that was to declare itself in the soul of almost every barbarian who came to ravage them. He began dimly to understand what the empire was. He felt ashamed of his own rudeness and of the barbarism of his people. Years afterwards he related to a citizen of Narbonne, who in his turn repeated the confession to S. Jerome in Palestine in the presence of the historian Orosius, the curious "conversion" that Italy had worked in his heart. "In the full confidence of valour and victory," said Ataulfus, "I once aspired to change the face of the universe; to obliterate the name of Rome; to erect on its ruins the dominion of the Goths; and to acquire, like Augustus, the immortal fame of the founder of a new empire. By repeated experiments I was gradually convinced that laws are essentially necessary to maintain and regulate a well constituted state, and that the fierce untractable humour of the Goths was incapable of bearing the salutary yoke of laws and civil government. From that moment I proposed to myself a different object of glory and ambition; and it is now my sincere wish that the gratitude of future ages should acknowledge the merit of a stranger who employed the sword of the Goths not to subvert but to restore and maintain the prosperity of the Roman Empire." [1]

With this change in his heart and the necessity of securing

[1] Orosius, vii. c. 43. Gibbon, c. xxxi.

a retreat upon the best terms he could arrange, Ataulfus looked on Placidia his captive and found her perhaps fair, certainly a prize almost beyond the dreams of a barbarian. He aspired to marry her, and she does not seem to have been unready to grant him her hand. Doubtless she had been treated by Alaric and his successor with an extraordinary respect not displeasing to so royal a lady, and Ataulfus, though not so tall as Alaric, was both shapely and noble.[1] There seems indeed to have been but one obstacle to this match. This was the ambition of Constantius, the new minister of Honorius, who wished to make his position secure by marrying Placidia himself.

Italy, however, needed peace as badly as the Goths needed a secure retreat. And when negotiations were opened it was seen that their success depended entirely upon this question of Placidia. A treaty was drawn up of friendship and alliance between the Goths and the empire. The services of Ataulfus were accepted against the barbarians who were harrying the provinces beyond the Alps, and the king, with Galla Placidia a willing captive, began his retreat from Campania into Gaul. His troops occupied the cities of Narbonne, Toulouse, and Bordeaux, and in spite of the protests and resistance of the harassed provincials soon extended their quarters from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic.

To hold the Goth to his friendship and to secure his absence from Italy nothing remained but to accord him the hand of Placidia; and in the year 414 at Narbonne their marriage was solemnised.[2]

With the retreat of the Goth and the treaty sealed by the marriage of Placidia, the sister of Honorius, and the Gothic

[1] Jornandes, c. xxxi.

[2] Olympiodorus and Idatius say the marriage took place at Narbonne, but Jornandes, *op cit.* c. 31, asserts that it took place at Forlì before Ataulfus left Italy. Perhaps there were two ceremonies, or perhaps the ceremony at Narbonne was but the celebration of an anniversary.

king, Italy secured herself a peace and a repose which endured for some forty-two years, only broken by the raid of Heraclian from Africa in 413.

But Ataulfus did not long survive his marriage. Having crossed the Pyrenees and surprised in the name of Honorius the city of Barcelona, he was assassinated in the palace there, and in the tumult which followed, Singeric, the brother of his enemy and a stranger to the royal race, was hailed as king. This revolution made Placidia once more a fugitive, and we see the daughter of Theodosius "confounded among a crowd of vulgar captives, compelled to march on foot above twelve miles before the horse of a barbarian, the assassin of a husband whom Placidia loved and lamented." On the seventh day of his reign, however, Singeric was himself assassinated and Wallia, who then became king of the Goths, after repeated representations backed at last by the despatch of an army surrendered the princess to her brother in exchange for 600,000 measures of wheat.

That must have been a strange home-coming for Placidia. Bought and sold twice over, twice a fugitive, the companion of the rude Goth, she is the most pathetic figure in all that terrible fifth century, and never does she appear more pitiful than on her return from the camps and the triumphs of the barbarians to the decadent splendour and the corruption of the imperial court of Ravenna, and again as a captive, a prize, booty.

For the man who had been at the head of that army whose approach, real or supposed, had decided the Goths to deliver up the sister of the emperor was Constantius, her old lover, he who had delayed her marriage with Ataulfus and who now determined to marry her himself.

It was in 416 that Placidia returned to Ravenna. In the following year Honorius gave her to Constantius, then his colleague in the consular office for the second time. The marriage ceremony of very great splendour took place in Ravenna; and in the same year was born of that marriage

Honoria, who was to offer herself to Attila, and in 419 Valentinian, one day to be emperor.

That marriage soon had the result Constantius had intended. In 421 Honorius was compelled to associate him with himself on the imperial throne and to give to Placidia the title of Augusta. The new emperor, however, survived his elevation to the throne but seven months and once more Placidia was a widow. Her life, never a happy one, if we except the few years in which she was the wife of Ataulfus, whom she seems really to have loved, became unbearable after the death of Constantius. At the mercy of her brother who was fast sinking, at the age of thirty-nine, into a vicious and idiotic senility, she, always a sincere Catholic in spite of her romantic marriage with the Arian Ataulfus, seems to have been forced into a horrible intimacy with him; at least we know that he obliged her to receive his obscene kisses, even in public, to the scandal and perhaps the amusement of that corrupt society. And then suddenly her brother's dreadful love seems to have turned to hate and she is a fugitive again with her two children at the court of her nephew Theodosius II. at Constantinople. In the very year of her flight Honorius died and the throne of the West was vacant.

It was filled by the obscure civil servant Joannes, the chief of the notaries, the creature of some palace intrigue. But such a choice could not be tolerated by Theodosius, who immediately confirmed Placidia in her title of Augusta, which had not before been recognised at Constantinople, and accepted Valentinian, whose title was Nobilissimus, as the heir to the western throne, giving him the title of Cæsar. To suppress the usurper Joannes, Theodosius despatched an army to bring Placidia and her children to Ravenna. After a short campaign in northern Italy, by a miracle, according to the contemporary historian Socrates, the troops of Theodosius arrived before Ravenna. "The prayer of the pious emperor again prevailed. For an angel of God, under the semblance of a shepherd, undertook the guidance of Aspar

and his troops, and led them through the lake near Ravenna. Now no one had ever been known to ford that lake before; but God then caused that to be possible which before had been impossible. But when they had crossed the lake, as if going over dry land, they found the gates of the city open and seized the tyrant Joannes." [1]

So the Augusta with the young Cæsar and her daughter Honoria entered Ravenna, to reign there, first as regent and then as the no less powerful adviser of her son, for some twenty-five years.

When Ravenna opened its gates some eighteen months had passed since the death of Honorius. But the appearance of that " angel of God under the semblance of a shepherd " had not been the only miracle that had occurred on the return of Placidia to the imperial city by the eastern sea. For it seems that on her voyage either from Constantinople to Aquileia, where she remained till Ravenna was taken, or from Aquileia to Ravenna, Placidia and her children were caught in a great storm at sea and came near to suffer shipwreck. Then Placidia prayed aloud, invoking the aid of S. John the Evangelist for deliverance from so great a peril, and vowing to build a church in his honour in Ravenna if he would bring them to land. And immediately the winds and the waves abated and the ship came safely to port.[2] It was in fulfilment of her vow that Placidia built in Ravenna the Basilica of S. John the Evangelist.

The city of Ravenna at this time would seem to have been full of churches. Its first bishop, S. Apollinaris, had been the friend of S. Peter who, as it was believed, had appointed him to the see of Ravenna. That was in the earliest days of

[1] Socrates, vii. 23. Cf. Hodgkin, *op cit.* i. 847.

[2] The invocation of S. John is curious, and we have not the key to it. For though he was a fisherman, so was S. Peter for instance. It is interesting, though not perhaps really significant, to note that it is only S. John who notes in his Gospel (vi. 21) that, when the Apostles saw Our Lord walking on the water in the great storm, and had received Him into their ship, " immediately the ship was at the land."

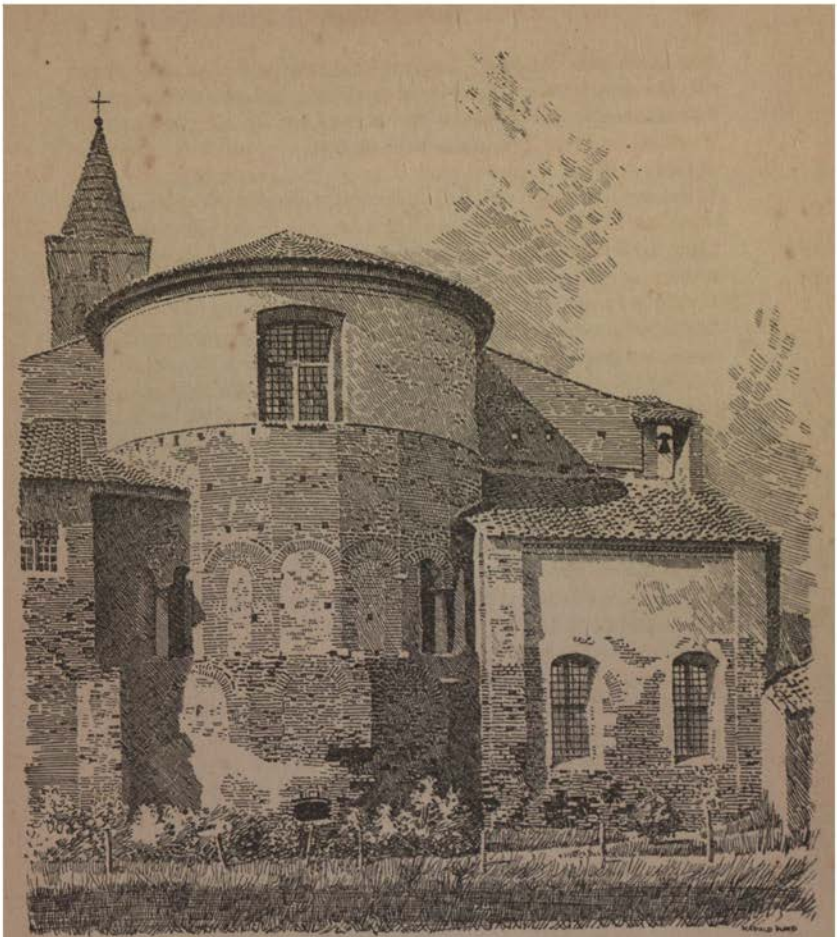
the Christian Church. But we find the tradition still living in the fourth century when Severus, bishop of Ravenna, miraculously chosen to fill the see, sat in the council of Sardica in 344 and refused to make any alteration in the Nicene Creed. About the end of the century Ursus had been bishop and had built the great cathedral church, the Basilica Ursiana, dedicated in honour of the Resurrection, with its five naves and fifty-six columns of marble, its *schola cantorum* in the midst, and its mosaics, all of which were finally and utterly destroyed in 1733. There was too the baptistery which remains and the church of S. Agata and many others which have perished.

With the church of S. Agata we connect one of the great bishops of the fifth century, Joannes Angeloptes, who was there served at Mass by an angel. While with the beautiful little chapel in the bishop's palace, which still, in some sort at least, remains to us, we connect perhaps the greatest bishop Ravenna can boast of, S. Peter Chrysologus, for he built it.

Nor was Placidia herself slow to add to the ecclesiastical splendour of her city. We have already seen that she built S. Giovanni Evangelista, rebuilt in the thirteenth century, in fulfilment of her vow and in memory of her salvation from shipwreck. Close to her palace she built another church in honour of the Holy Cross, and attached to it she erected her mausoleum, which remains perhaps the most precious monument in the city. The church and the monastery which her niece Singleida built beside it have perished.

But though during the lifetime of Placidia Italy was free from foreign invasion, the decay of the western empire, of what had been the western empire, was by no means arrested; on the contrary, Britain, Gaul, Spain, and Africa were finally lost. Two appalling catastrophes mark her reign, the Vandal invasion of the province of Africa and the ever growing cloud of Huns upon the north-eastern frontiers.

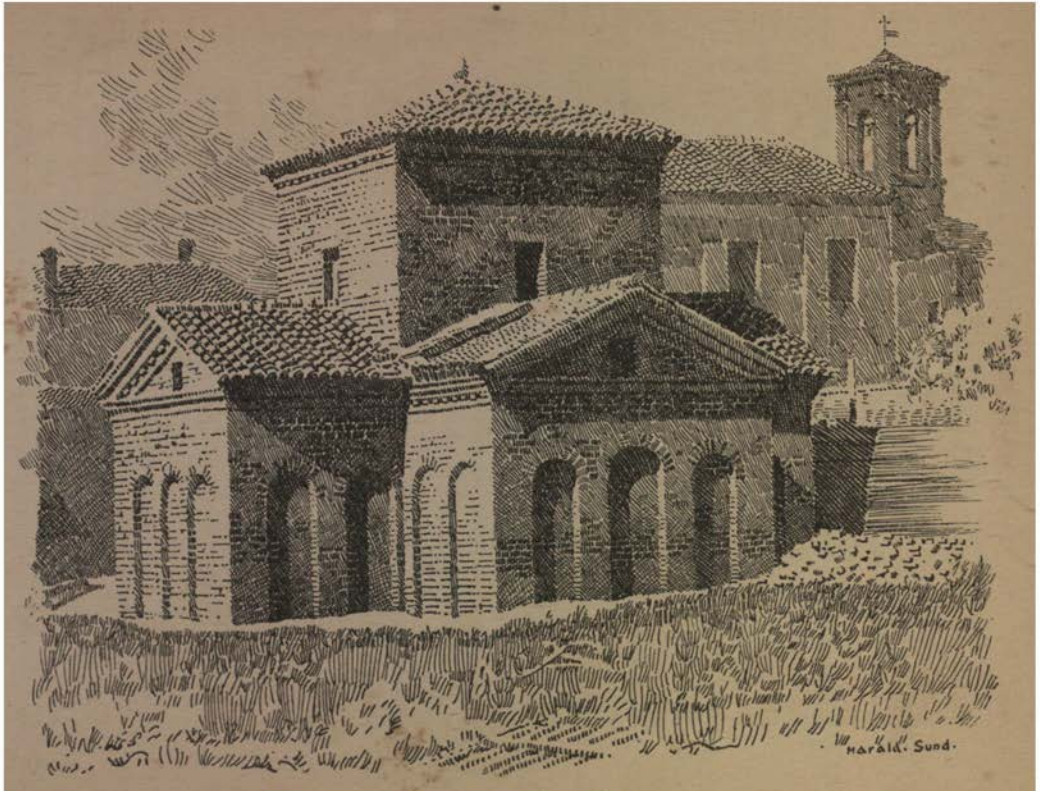
Placidia's two chief ministers were Boniface and Aetius, either of whom, according to Procopius, "had the other not



THE APSE OF S. GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA

been his contemporary, might truly have been called the last of the Romans." Their simultaneous appearance, however, finally destroyed all hope of an immediate resurrection of civilisation in the West. For Boniface, whose "one great object was the deliverance of Africa from all sorts of barbarians," betrayed Africa to the Vandals, and to this he was led by the rivalry and intrigue of Aetius who, on the other hand, must always be remembered for his heroic and glorious victory over Attila at Châlons which delivered Gaul from the worst deluge of all—that of the Huns.

The truth would seem to be that while corruption of every sort, and especially political corruption, was destroying the empire, the importance of Christianity was vastly increasing. The great quarrel was really that between Catholicism and heresy. This was a living issue while the cause of the empire as a political entity was already dead. Placidia certainly eagerly considered all sorts of ecclesiastical problems and provided and legislated for their solution. We do not find her seeking the advice and offensive and defensive alliance of Constantinople for the restoration of her provinces. It might seem almost as though the mind of her time was unable to fix itself upon the vast political and economic problem that now for many generations had demanded a solution in vain. No one seems to have cared in any fundamental way, or even to have been aware, that the empire as a great state was gradually being ruined, was indeed already in full decadence —a thing to despair of. That is the curious thing—no one seems to have despaired. On the other hand, every one was keenly interested in the religious controversy of the time which, because we cannot fully understand that time, seems to us so futile. But it is only what is in the mind that is fundamentally important to man, and that will force him to action. The council of Ephesus which destroyed Nestorius in 431, the council of Chalcedon which condemned Dioscorus in 451, seemed to be the important things, and one day we may come to think again, that on those great decisions, and not on



THE MAUSOLEUM OF GALLA PLACIDIA

the material defence, both military and economic, of the West, depended the future of the world. If this be so, it would at least explain the hopeless variance of East and West, which, almost equally concerned in the material problem, were by no means at one in philosophy.

Nevertheless, although Theodosius II. had not trodden "the narrow path of orthodoxy with reputation unimpaired," as Placidia certainly had, the material alliance of East and West were seen to be so important that in 437 Valentinian III., the son of Placidia, and emperor in the West, was married to Eudoxia, the daughter of Theodosius II., in Constantinople.

Neither the accession of her son nor his marriage seem to have made any real difference in the power of Placidia who, we may believe, not, as Procopius asserts, by a cunning system of training by which she had ruined his character, but rather by reason of her innate virility, retained the reins of government in her own hands. Certainly she ruled, the Augusta of the West, during the twelve years that remained to her after her son's marriage. And when at last she died in Rome in 450, on the 27th November,[1] in the sixtieth year of her age, and a few months after her nephew Theodosius II., and was borne in a last triumph along the Via Flaminia, to be laid, seated in a chair of cedar, in a sarcophagus of alabaster in the gorgeous mausoleum she had prepared for herself beside the church of S. Croce in Ravenna, she left Italy at least in a profound peace, so secure, as it seemed, that the whole court had in that very year removed to Rome. It might appear as though the barbarian had but awaited her passing to descend once more upon the citadel of Europe.

[1] Agnellus asserts that on the Ides of March in the year following Placidia's death Ravenna suffered from a great fire, in which many buildings perished, but he does not tell us what they were.

V

THE FALL OF THE EMPIRE IN THE WEST

For more than ten years before the death of Placidia both East and West had been aware of a new cloud in the north-east. This darkness was the vast army of Huns, which, in the exodus from Asia proper, under Attila, threatened to overrun the empire and to lay it waste. In 447, indeed, Attila fell upon the Adriatic and Ægean provinces of the eastern empire and ravaged them till he was bought off with a shameful tribute. His thoughts inevitably turned towards the capital, and it is said, I know not with how much truth, that in the very year of their death both Placidia and Theodosius received from this new barbarian an insolent message which said: "Attila, thy master and mine, bids thee prepare a palace for him."

Theodosius II., however, was succeeded upon the Eastern throne by his sister Pulcheria who shared her government with the virile and bold soldier Marcian. But upon Placidia's death, on the other hand, the government of the West fell into the hands of her weak and sensual son Valentinian III.

Placidia's greatest failure, indeed, was in the training and education of her children. Valentinian was incapable and vicious, while Honoria, who had inherited much of the romantic temperament of her mother, was both unscrupulous and irresponsible. Sent to Constantinople on account of an intrigue with her chamberlain, Honoria, bored by the ascetic

life in which she found herself and furious at her virtual imprisonment, sent her ring to Attila and besought him to deliver her and make her his wife as Ataulfus had done Placidia her mother. Though, it seems, the Hun disdained her, he made this appeal his excuse. Within a year of the death of Theodosius and Placidia he decided that the way of least resistance lay westward. If he were successful he could make his own terms, and, among his spoil, if he cared, should be the sister of the emperor.

At first it was Gaul that was to be plundered; but there, as we know, the wild beast was met by Aetius who defeated him at the battle of Châlons and thus saved the western provinces. But that victory was not followed up. Attila and his vast army were allowed to retreat; and though Gaul was saved, Italy lay at their mercy. That was in 451. Attila retreated into Pannonia, and prepared for a new raid in the following year.

He came, as Alaric had done, through the Julian Alps; and before spring had gone Aquileia was not, Concordia was utterly destroyed, Altinum became nothing. Nor have these cities ever lived again; out of their ruin Venice sprang in the midst of the lagoons. All the Cisalpine plain north of the Po was in Attila's hands; Vicenza, Verona, Brescia, Bergamo, Pavia, even Milan opened their gates. No defence was offered, they saved themselves alive. And southward, over the Po, between the mountains and the sea, the gate which Ravenna held stood open wide. Italy without defence lay at the mercy of the Asiatic invader.

Without defence! Valentinian and his court were in Rome; no one armed and ready waited in impregnable Ravenna to break the Hun as with a hammer when he should venture to take the road through the narrow pass between the mountains and the sea. The great defence was not to be held; the road, as once before, lay open and unguarded. In this moment, one of the greatest crises in the history of Europe, suddenly, and without warning, the reality of that

age, which had changed so imperceptibly, was revealed. The material civilisation and defence of the empire were, at least as organised things, seen to be dead; its spiritual virility and splendour were about to be made manifest.

For it was not any emperor or great soldier at the head of an army that faced Attila by the Mincio on the Cisalpine plain and saved Italy, but an old and unarmed man, alone and defenceless. Our saviour was pope Leo the Great; but above him, in the sky, the Hun perceived the mighty figures, overshadowing all that world, of S. Peter and S. Paul, and his eyes dazzled, he bowed his head. "What," he asked himself, "if I conquer like Alaric only to die as he did?" He yielded and consented to retreat, Italy was saved. The new emperor, the true head and champion of the new civilisation that was to arise out of all this confusion, had declared himself. It was the pope.

There, it might seem, we have the truth at last, the explanation, perhaps, of all the extraordinary ennui and neglect that had made such an invasion as that of Alaric, as that of Radagaisus, as this of Attila, possible. For it is only what is in the mind that is of any importance. The empire rightly understood was not about to die, but to change into a new spiritual kingdom in the hearts of men; and there, in the place of the emperor, would sit God's Vicegerent, till in the fullness of time the material empire should be re-established and that Vicegerent should place the imperial crown once more upon a merely royal head. The force of the old empire had always lain in wholly material things and its excuse had been its material success; but it was a servile state, and after the advent of Christianity it was inevitable that it should change or perish. It changed. The force of the new empire was to be so completely spiritual that to-day we can scarcely understand it. Upon the banks of the Mincio it declared itself; and when, twenty-three years later, Odoacer the barbarian deposed Romulus Augustulus and made himself king of Italy, the true champion of all that Latin

genius had established was already enthroned in Rome; but the throne was Peter's, and men called him not Emperor but Father.

Those twenty-three years, so brief a period, are, as we might imagine, full of confusion and strange barbarian voices.

After Leo had turned him back from Italy there by the Mincio, Attila retreated again into Pannonia, but he still insisted "on this point above all, that Honoria, the sister of the emperor and the daughter of the Augusta Placidia, should be sent to him with the portion of the royal wealth which was her due; and he threatened that unless this were done he would lay upon Italy a far heavier punishment than any which it had yet borne." But within a year Attila was dead in a barbaric marriage-bed by the Danube, and his empire destroyed. And as for Honoria we know no more of her, she disappears from history, though tradition has it that she spent the rest of her life in a convent in southern Italy.

The two heroes of the Hunnish deluge in the West were Aetius, the great general who broke Attila upon the plain of Châlons, and Leo the pope surnamed the Great. Aetius had been unable to persuade his victorious troops to march to the defence of Italy, and in this again we see the growing failure of the imperial idea; but he was a great soldier, and certainly the greatest minister that Valentinian III. could boast. Nevertheless, after the death of Attila he seemed to the emperor both dangerous and useless; dangerous because, like Stilicho, he thought of the empire for his son, and useless because Valentinian had recently placed his confidence in another, the eunuch Heraclius. Just as Honorius contrived the murder of Stilicho, so did Valentinian contrive to rid himself of Aetius, and with his own hand, for Valentinian stabbed him himself in his palace on the Palatine Hill in Rome, towards the end of 454. Six months, however, had not gone by when Aetius was avenged and Valentinian lay dead in the Campus Martius stabbed by two soldiers of barbarian origin. Beside him, dead too, lay the eunuch Heraclius. This was the vengeance

of the friends of Aetius, and of him who was to be emperor, Petronius Maximus, whose wife Valentinian had ravished.

With Valentinian III., who had no children, the great line of Theodosius came to an end both in the East and in the West, for Pulcheria had died in 453. In Constantinople Marcian continued to rule till 457, when he was succeeded by Leo I. the Thracian. In Rome he who had so signally avenged himself, Petronius Maximus, a senator, sixty years of age, reigned during seventy days in which he was rather a prisoner than a monarch. During those seventy days, whether moved by lust or revenge we know not, he attempted to make the widow of Valentinian his wife. This brought all down, for Eudoxia, without a friend in the world, followed the fatal example of Honoria and called in the Vandal to her assistance. And when Genseric was on his way to answer her from Carthage, the terrified City, by the hands of the imperial servants and the soldiers, tore the emperor limb from limb and flung what remained into the Tiber so that even burial was denied him. But the Vandal came on, and in spite of Leo, as we know, sacked the City and departed—to lose the mighty booty in the midst of the sea.

What are we to say of the years which follow, and what are we to say of those ghostly figures, which hover, always uncertainly and briefly, about the imperial throne after the assassination of Valentinian III. and the second sack of the City? There was Avitus the Gaul (455-456), Majorian (457-461), Libius Severus (461-465), Anthemius (467-472), Olybrius (472), Glycerius (473-474), Julius Nepos (474-475), and at last the pitiful boy Romulus Augustulus (475-476). Nothing can be said of them; they are less than shadows, and their empire, the material empire they represented, was no longer conscious of itself, was no longer a reality, but an hallucination, haunting the mind. It is true that the chief seat of their government, if government it can be called, was Ravenna, and that the city is concerned with most of the incidents of those vague and confused years; the proclama-

tions of Majorian, of Severus, of Glycerius, and of Romulus Augustulus, the abdication of the last and the fight in the pinewood in which his uncle Paulus was broken and Odoacer made himself master. But they are, for the most part, the years of Ricimer the patrician, for they are full of his puppets.

This man is another Stilicho, another Aetius, a great and heroic soldier, but of a sinister and subtle policy without loyalty or scruple. His is a figure that often appears about the death-bed of dying states, but his genius has not so often been matched. The son of a Suevic father, his mother the daughter of Wallia, the successor and avenger of Ataulfus the Visigoth, he was the champion of the empire against the Vandal, that is to say, against her most relentless foe. His success in this was the secret of his power. Pondering the fate of his predecessors he determined he would not end as they did. Therefore he determined to make whom he would emperor and to depose him when he had done with him; in a word, he meant to be the master as well as the saviour of Italy. In this he was successful. He deposed Avitus and caused him to be consecrated bishop of Placentia. In his place he set a man of his own choice, Majorian, whom he raised to the empire on April 1, 457, in the camp at Columellæ, at the sixth milestone, it seems, from Ravenna; and upon August 2, 461, he caused him to be put to death near Tortona.

He chose Libius Severus to fill the place of Majorian and had him proclaimed in Ravenna upon November 19, 461; and upheld him for nearly four years till he died in Rome on August 15, 465, poisoned, men said, by Ricimer. Then the "king-maker" allied himself with Constantinople and placed Anthemius, son-in-law of Marcian, upon the throne of the West, in 467, kept him there till 472, and then proclaimed Olybrius, another Byzantine, emperor; laid siege to Anthemius in Rome, took the City, slew Anthemius, and forty days later himself died, leaving the command of his army to his nephew Gundobald, one of the princes of the Burgundians. Seven months later Olybrius died.

The alliance Ricimer had made with Constantinople, though he repented it, was the one hope of the future, and as a fact the future belonged to it. For a moment Gundobald was able to place an obscure soldier Glycerius upon the throne, but he soon exchanged the purple for the bishopric of Salona, and the nominee of Constantinople, Julius Nepos, reigned in Ravenna in his stead. But though the future belonged to Constantinople, the present did not. The barbarian confederates, discontented and unwilling to give their allegiance to this Greek, rebelled and under Orestes their general marched upon Ravenna. Julius Nepos fled by ship to Dalmatia and Orestes in Ravenna proclaimed his young son Romulus Augustulus emperor. But those barbarian mercenaries were not to be so easily satisfied. Of the new emperor they demanded a third of the lands of all Italy, and when this was refused them they flocked to the standard of that barbarian general in the Roman service whom we know as Odoacer. "From all the camps and garrisons of Italy" the barbarian confederates flocked to the new standard and Orestes was compelled to shut himself up in Pavia while Paulus, his brother, held Ravenna for the boy emperor. Upon August 23, 476, Odoacer was raised like the barbarian he was, upon the shield, as Alaric had been, and his troops proclaimed him king. Five days later Orestes, who had escaped from Pavia, was taken and put to death at Placentia, and on September 4 Paulus his brother was taken in the Pineta outside Classis by Ravenna and was slain. The gates of Ravenna were open, Romulus Augustulus, the last emperor in the West, was forced to abdicate and was sent by Odoacer to the famous villa that Lucullus had built for himself long and long ago in Campania, and was granted a pension of six thousand *soldi*, and Odoacer reigned as the first king of Italy; the western empire, as such, was at an end.

And the senate addressed, by unanimous decree, to the emperor Zeno in Constantinople an epistle, in which they disclaimed "the necessity, or even the wish, of continuing any

longer the imperial succession in Italy, since, in their opinion, the majesty of a sole monarch is sufficient to pervade and protect at the same time both East and West. In their own name and in the name of the people they consent to the seat of universal empire being transferred from Rome to Constantinople, and they renounce the right of choosing their master.* They further state that the republic (they repeat that name without a blush) might safely confide in the civil and military virtues of Odoacer; and they humbly request that the emperor would invest him with the title of patrician and the administration of the *diocese* of Italy."

And Odoacer sent the diadem and the purple robe, the imperial ensigns, the sacred ornaments of the throne and palace to Byzantium and received thence the title of patrician.

VI

THEODORIC

We may well ask what was the condition of Ravenna when the western empire fell and Odoacer made himself king of Italy. And by the greatest of good fortune we can answer that question. For we have a fairly vivid account of Ravenna from the hand of Sidonius Apollinaris who passed through the city on his way to Rome in 467.

Ravenna had been the chief city of Italy during the seventy years of revolution and administrative disaster and decay which had followed the incursion of Alaric. For the greater part of that period she had been the seat of the emperors and of their government, and it is perhaps for reasons such as these that we find, after all, but little change in her condition. She does not seem to have suffered much decay since Honorius retreated upon her.

"It is difficult," Sidonius tells us, "to say whether the old city of Ravenna is separated from the new port or joined to it by the Via Cæsaris which lies between them. Above the town the Po is divided into two streams, of which one washes its walls and the other passes through its streets. The whole river has been diverted from its true channel by means of large mounds thrown across it at the public expense, and being thus drawn off into channels marked out for it, so divides its waters, that they offer protection to the walls which they encompass and bring commerce into the city which they penetrate. By this route, which is most con-

venient for the purpose, all kinds of mechandise arrive, and especially food. But against this must be set the fact that the supply of drinking water is wretched. On the one side you have the salt waves of the sea dashing against the gates, on the other the canals, filled with sewage of the consistency of gruel, are being constantly churned up by the passage of the barges; and the river itself, here gliding along with a very slow current, is made muddy by the poles of the bargemen which are being continually thrust into its clayey bed. The consequence was that we were thirsty in the midst of the waves, since no wholesome water was brought to us by the aqueducts, no cistern was flowing, no well was without its mud." [1]

In another letter we have a rather more fantastic picture. "A pretty place Cesena must be if Ravenna is better, for there your ears are pierced by the mosquito of the Po and a talkative mob of frogs is always croaking round you. Ravenna is a mere marsh where all the conditions of life are reversed, where walls fall and waters stand, towers flow down and ships squat, invalids walk about and their doctors take to bed, baths freeze and houses burn, the living perish with thirst and the dead swim about on the surface of the water, thieves watch and magistrates sleep, priests lend at usury and Syrians sing psalms, merchants shoulder arms and soldiers haggle like hucksters, greybeards play at ball and striplings at dice, and eunuchs study the art of war and the barbarian mercenaries study literature." [2]

Such was the Ravenna of the barbarian who called himself king of Italy.

We have seen Ravenna since her incorporation into the Roman administrative system fulfilling the various reasons of her existence; as the fortress which held the gate into Italy from Cisalpine Gaul, as the second naval port of the West, and as the great impregnable fortress of Italy in the barbarian

[1] Sidonius Apoll. *Ep.* i. 5. Cf. Hodgkin, *op. cit.* vol. i. p. 859.
[2] *Idem. Ep.* i. 8. Cf. Hodgkin, *op cit.* vol. i. p. 860.

invasions. Odoacer, also, chose it as his chief seat of government for similar advantages. Ravenna strongly held gave him, as strongly held she had given every one of her masters, Italy and Cisalpine Gaul; while as the gate of the eastern sea, Ravenna was his proper means of communication with his overlord and the eastern provinces of what was, rightly understood, the reunited empire.

That, theoretically at least, is how Odoacer regarded the state in which, by the good pleasure of the emperor Zeno, he held the title of patrician. He was an unlettered man, an Arian, as were all the barbarians, and he held what he held by permission of Constantinople, though he had won it by his own strength in the weakness and misery of the time. He never aspired, it would seem, to make himself emperor. Certainly for the first four years of his rule in Ravenna that great office was filled by Julius Nepos in exile at Salona, whose deposition at the hands of Orestes had never been recognised by Constantinople. Thereafter, the western and the eastern empire were in theory reunited, with New Rome upon the Bosphorus for their true capital; and both before and after that event Odoacer ruled in Italy with the title of patrician conferred upon him by Constantinople. When that consent was withdrawn, as it was immediately Odoacer showed signs of ambition, he fell.

Odoacer had ruled in Ravenna from 476 to 493, when he fell in that city after sustaining a siege of three years. He ruled well and strongly and by the laws of the empire. He was compelled by the barbaric confederates, who had placed him where he was, to grant them a third of the lands, certainly, of the great Italian landowners; but he created nothing new; like all the barbarians he was sterile, his only service was a service of destruction. With him even this service was small.

His fall was curious and is exceedingly significant.

In 481, after the murder of the emperor Julius Nepos in Salona, Odoacer led an expedition into Dalmatia to chastise the murderers and seized the opportunity to make himself

master of Dalmatia. This action at once renewed the suspicion of Constantinople; but when in 484 Odoacer entered into negotiations with Illus, the last of the insurgents who disturbed the reign of Zeno, Constantinople decided that he must be broken; therefore Feletheus, king of the Rugians upon the Danube, was stirred up against him, and when that failed, for Odoacer defeated him, Constantinople sent Theodoric and his Ostrogothic host into Italy to dispose of Odoacer the patrician.[1]

Theodoric, another unlettered barbarian and heretic, but a man of a great and noble character, set out for Italy from Nova on the southern bank of the Danube, where he had been a constant danger to the Eastern provinces, in the autumn of 488. His purpose, set forth in his own words to the Emperor Zeno, was as follows: "Although your servant is maintained in affluence by your liberality, graciously listen to the wishes of my heart. Italy, the inheritance of your predecessors, and Rome itself, the head and mistress of the world, now fluctuate under the violence and oppression of Odoacer the mercenary. Direct me with my national troops to march against this tyrant. If I fall, you will be delivered from an expensive and troublesome friend; if, with the Divine permission, I succeed, I shall govern, in your name and to your glory, the Roman senate and the part of the republic delivered from slavery by my victorious arms."

That march was an exodus. Procopius tells us that, "with Theodoric went the people of the Goths, putting their wives and children and as much of their furniture as they could take with them into their waggons," and as Ennodius, bishop of Ticinum, asserts, it was "a world that migrated" with Theodoric into Italy, "a world of which every member is nevertheless your kinsman." "Waggons," says he, "are made to do duty as houses, and into these wandering habitations all things that can minister to the needs of the occupants

[1] Cf. Anon. Valesii, "Missus ab imperatore Zenone de partibus orientis ad defendendam sibi Italiam. . . ."

are poured. Then were the tools of Ceres, and the stones with which the corn is ground, dragged along by the labouring oxen. Pregnant mothers, forgetful of their sex and of the burden which they bore, undertook the toil of providing food for the families of thy people. Followed the reign of winter in thy camp. Over the hair of thy men the long frost threw a veil of snowy white; the icicles hung in a tangle from their beards. So hard was the frost that the garment which the matron's persevering toil had woven had to be broken before a man might fit it to his body. Food for thy marching armies was forced from the grasp of the hostile nations around, or procured by the cunning of the hunter." [1] It has been supposed by Mr. Hodgkin that not less than 40,000 fighting men and some 200,000 souls in all thus entered Italy. To us it might seem that no such number of people could have lived without commissariat during that tremendous march of seven hundred miles through some of the poorest land of Europe in the depth of winter. However that may be, Theodoric after many an encounter with barbarians wilder than his own descended from the Julian Alps into Venetia in August 489, after a march of not less than ten months.

Odoacer was waiting for him. He met him near the site of the old fortress of Aquileia, which Attila had annihilated, that once held the passage of the Sontius (Isonzo). He was defeated and all Venetia fell into the hands of the Ostrogoth. Odoacer retreated to Verona, that red fortress on the Adige; once more and more certainly he was beaten. He retreated to Ravenna,[2] while Theodoric advanced to Milan, to Milan which now led nowhere.

After Verona, Theodoric had received the submission of a part of Odoacer's army under Tufa. When he had possessed himself of Milan, he sent these renegades and certain nobles with their men from his own army, apparently under the

[1] Ennodius, *Panegyricus*, p. 173. Trs. by Hodgkin, *op. cit.* iii. 179-80.

[2] "Et Ravennam cum exercitu fugiens pervenit." Anon. Valesii, 50.

leadership of Tufa, to besiege Ravenna. They came down the Æmilian Way as far as Faventia (Faenza). There no doubt a road left the great highway for the impregnable city of the marshes. At Faventia, then, Theodoric expected to begin to blockade Ravenna. In this he was mistaken. Suddenly Tufa deserted his new master, was joined by Odoacer, who came to Faventia, and certain of the Ostrogothic nobles, if not all of them, were slaughtered. The expedition was lost and not the expedition alone: Milan was no longer safe. Therefore Theodoric evacuated that city, always almost indefensible, and occupied Ticinum (Pavia), which was naturally defended by the Ticino and the Po. There he established himself in winter quarters.

A new diversion from the west, a frustrated attack of Gundobald and his Burgundians, kept Theodoric busy for a year. Meantime Odoacer appeared in the plain, retook and held all the country between Faventia and Cremona and even visited Milan, which he chastised. Then in August 490 Theodoric met him on the Adda, and again Odoacer was defeated, and again he fled back to Ravenna. All over Italy his cause tottered, was betrayed, or failed. A general massacre of the confederate troops throughout the peninsula seems to have occurred. And by the end of the year there remained to him but Ravenna, his fortress, and the two cities that it commanded, Cesena upon the Æmilian Way and Rimini in the midst of the narrow pass at the head of the Via Flaminia. Theodoric himself began the siege of Ravenna.

This siege, the first that Ravenna had ever experienced, endured for near three years, from the autumn of 490 to the spring of 493. "*Et mox*," says a chronicle of the time, "*subsecutus est eum patricius Theodoricus veniens in Pineta, et fixit fossatum, obsidiens Odoacrem clausum per trienum in Ravenna et factus est usque ad sex solidos modicus tritici. . . .*"[1] Theodoric established himself in a fortified camp in the

[1] Anon. Valesii

Pineta with a view to preventing food or reinforcements arriving to his enemy from the sea. Ravenna was closed upon all sides and before the end of the siege corn rose in the beleaguered city to famine price, some seventy-two shillings of our money per peck, and the inhabitants were forced to eat the skins of animals and all sorts of offal, and many died of hunger.

In 491, according to the same chronicler,[1] a sortie was made by Odoacer and his barbarians, but after a desperate fight in the Pineta this was repelled by Theodoric. In 492, another chronicle tells us,[2] Theodoric took Rimini and from thence brought a fleet of ships to the Porto Leone, some six miles from Ravenna, thus cutting off the city from the sea. Till at last in the beginning of 493 Odoacer was compelled to open negotiations for surrender. He gave his son Thelane as a hostage, and on the 26th February Theodoric entered Classis, and on the following day the treaty of peace was signed. Upon the 5th March 493, according to Agnellus, "that most blessed man, the archbishop John, opened the gates of the city which Odoacer had closed, and went forth with crosses and thuribles and the Holy Gospels seeking peace, with the priests and clergy singing psalms, and prostrating himself upon the ground obtained what he sought. He welcomed the new king coming from the East and peace was granted to him, not only with the citizens of Ravenna, but with the other Romans for whom the blessed John asked it."

The terms of that treaty are extraordinarily significant of the importance of Ravenna in the defence of Italy. It would seem that Theodoric had possessed himself of everything but Ravenna easily enough, yet without Ravenna everything else was nothing. The city was, in spite of blockade and famine, impregnable, and it commanded so much, was still indeed, as always, the key to Italy and the plain and the very gate of the West, that not to possess it was to lose everything.

[1] Anon. Valesii. [2] Agnellus, *Liber Pontificalis Rav.*

Its surrender was necessary and Theodoric offered extraordinary terms to obtain it. Odoacer was not only to keep his life but his power. He was to rule as the equal of Theodoric. This mighty concession shows us at once what Ravenna really was, what part she played in the government of Italy, and how unique was her position in the military scheme of that country.

Theodoric had certainly no intention of carrying out the terms of his treaty. In the very month in which he signed it, he invited Odoacer to a feast at the Palace "in Lauro" to the south-east of Ravenna. When the patrician arrived two petitioners knelt before him each clasping one of his hands, and two of Theodoric's men stepped from hiding to kill him. Perhaps they were not barbarians: at any rate, they lacked the courage and the contempt alike of law and of honour necessary to commit so cold a murder. It was Theodoric himself who lifted his sword and hewed his enemy in twain from the shoulder to the loins. "Where is God?" Odoacer, expecting the stroke, had demanded. And Theodoric answered, "Thus didst thou to my friends." And after he said, "I think the wretch had no bones in his body."

The barbarian it might seem had certainly nothing to learn from the worst of the emperors in treachery and dishonour.

Theodoric set up his seat in the city he had so perfidiously won, and for the next thirty years appears as the governour of Italy. He had set out, it will be remembered, as the soldier of Constantinople, had asked for leave to make his expedition, and had protested his willingness to govern in the name of the emperor and for his glory. It is not perhaps surprising that a barbarian, and especially Theodoric who knew so well how to win by treachery what he could not otherwise obtain, should after his victory forget the promise he had made to his master. After the battle of the Adda he had the audacity to send an embassy to the emperor to request that he might be allowed to clothe himself in the royal mantle. This was

of course refused. Nevertheless the Goths "confirmed Theodoric to themselves as king without waiting for the order of the new emperor Anastasius." [1] This "confirmation," whatever it may have meant to the Goths, meant nothing to the Romans or to the empire. For some years Constantinople refused all acknowledgment to Theodoric, till in 497 peace was made and Theodoric obtained recognition, much it may be thought as Odoacer had done, from Constantinople; but the ornaments of the palace at Ravenna, which Odoacer had sent to New Rome, were brought back, and therefore it would seem that the royalty of Theodoric was acknowledged by the empire; but we have no authority to see in this more than an acknowledgment of the king of the Goths, the vicegerent perhaps of the emperor in Italy. What Theodoric's title may have been we have no means of knowing: *de jure* he was the representative of the emperor in Italy: *de facto* he was the absolute ruler, the *tyrannus*, as Odoacer had been, of the country; but he never ventured to coin money bearing his effigy and superscription and he invariably sent the names of the consuls, whom he appointed, to Constantinople for confirmation. He ruled too, as Odoacer had done, by Roman law, and the Arian heresy, which he and his barbarians professed as their religion, was not till the very end of his reign permitted precedence over the Catholic Faith. For the most part too he governed by means of Roman officials, and

CAPITAL FROM THE COLONNADE IN PIAZZA MAGGIORE

[1] Anon. Valesii, 57.

to this must be ascribed the enormous success of his long government.

For that he was successful, that he gave Italy peace during a whole generation, is undeniable. In all the chronicles there is little but praise of him. The chief of them [1] says of him: "He was an illustrious man and full of good-will towards all. He reigned thirty-three years [2] and during thirty of these years so great was the happiness of Italy that even the wayfarers were at peace. For he did nothing evil. He governed the two nations, the Goths and the Romans, as though they were one people. Belonging himself to the Arian sect, he yet ordained that the civil administration should remain for the Romans as it had been under the emperors. He gave presents and rations to the people, yet though he found the treasury ruined he brought it by hard work into a flourishing state. He attempted nothing against the Catholic Faith. He exhibited games in the circus and amphitheatre, and received from the Romans the names of Trajan and Valentinian, for the happy days of those most prosperous emperors he did in truth seek to restore, and at the same time the Goths rendered true obedience to their valiant king according to the edict which he had given them.

"He gave one of his daughters in marriage to the king of the Visigoths in Gaul, another to the son of the Burgundian king; his sister to the king of the Vandals and his niece to the king of the Thuringians. Thus he pleased all the nations round him, for he was a lover of manufactures and a great restorer of cities. He restored the Aqueduct of Ravenna which Trajan had built, and again after a long interval brought water into the city. He completed but did not dedicate the Palace, and he finished the Porticoes about it. At Verona he erected Baths and a Palace, and constructed

[1] Anon. Valesii. This was probably Bishop Maximian, a Catholic bishop of Ravenna. I follow, with a few changes, Mr. Hodgkin's translation.

[2] Thirty-two years and a half from the death of Odoacer; thirty-seven from his descent into Italy.

a Portico from the Gate to the Palace. The Aqueduct, which had been destroyed long since, he renewed, and brought in water through it. He also surrounded the city with new walls. At Ticinum (Pavia) too he built a Palace, Baths, and an Amphitheatre and erected walls round the city. On many other cities he bestowed similar benefits.

"Thus he so delighted the nations near him that they entered into a league with him hoping that he would be their king. The merchants, too, from many provinces flocked to his dominions, for so great was the order which he maintained, that, if any one wished to keep gold and silver in the country it was as safe as in a walled city. A proof of this was that he never made gates for any city of Italy, and the gates that already existed were never closed. Any one who had business to do, might go about it as safely by night as by day."

But if such praise sound fulsome, let us hear what the sceptical and censorious Procopius has to say:

"Theodoric," he tells us, "was an extraordinary lover of justice and adhered vigorously to the laws. He guarded the country from barbarian invasions, and displayed the greatest intelligence and prudence. There was in his government scarcely a trace of injustice towards his subjects, nor would he permit any of those under him to attempt anything of the kind except that the Goths divided among themselves the same proportion of the land of Italy as Odoacer had given to his confederates. Thus then Theodoric was in name a tyrant, in fact a true king, not inferior to the best of his predecessors, and his popularity increased greatly both with the Goths and the Italians, and this was contrary to the ordinary course of human affairs. For generally as different classes in the state want different things, the government which pleases one party incurs the hatred of the other. After a reign of thirty-seven years he died having been a terror to all his enemies, but leaving a deep regret for his loss in the hearts of his subjects."

In these panegyrics, which we cannot but accept as sincere, mention is made of one of the greatest virtues of Theodoric,

his reparation of and care for the great monuments of the empire. In Ravenna we read he repaired the Aqueduct which Trajan had built and which had long been out of repair, so that Ravenna always deficient in water had for many years suffered on this account. In the *Variæ* of Cassiodorus, his minister and a Roman, we read as follows:—

"*King Theodoric to all Cultivators.*

"The Aqueducts are an object of our special care. We desire you at once to root up the shrubs growing in the Signine channel, which will before long become big trees scarcely to be hewn down with an axe and which interfere with the purity of the water in the Aqueduct of Ravenna. Vegetation is the peaceable overturner of buildings, the battering-ram which brings them to the ground, though the trumpets never sound for siege. Now we shall have Baths again that we may look upon with pleasure; water which will cleanse not stain;[1] water after using which we shall not require to wash ourselves again; drinking water too, such as the mere sight of it will not take away all appetite for food."[2]

The general restoration of the great material works of the empire was characteristic of the reign of Theodoric and could only have been carried out by Roman officials and workmen. It is especially frequent in Ravenna and in Rome. Theodoric will, if he can help it, have nothing more destroyed. He is afraid of destruction, and that is a mark of the barbarian. He wishes, Cassiodorus tells us, "to build new edifices without despoiling the old. But we are informed that in your municipality (of Æstunæ) there are blocks of masonry and columns, formerly belonging to some building, now lying absolutely useless and unhonoured. If this be so, send these slabs of marble and columns by all means to Ravenna that they may again be made beautiful and take their place in a building

[1] Cf. Sidonius Apollinaris above.

[2] Cassiodorus, *Variae*, v. 38. Trs. Hodgkin, *The Letters of Cassiodorus* (Oxford, 1886).

S. Apollinare in Classe

there."[1] And again: "We rely upon your zeal and prudence to see that the required blocks of marble are forwarded from Faenza to Ravenna without any extortion from private persons; so that, on the one hand, our desire for the adornment of that city may be gratified, and, on the other, there may be no cause for complaint on the part of our subjects."[2]

His care and adornment of Ravenna are remarkable. It was his capital and he built there with a truly Roman splendour. We hear vaguely of a Basilica of Hercules which was to be adorned with a mosaic, though what this may have been we do not know; but we still have the magnificent Arian church of S. Apollinare, which he called S. Martin *de Coelo Aureo* because of its beautiful gilded roof; and less perfectly there remains to us the Arian church he built, called then S. Theodore and now S. Spirito, and the Arian baptistery beside it; the ruin, known as his palace, and his mighty tomb.

The government of Theodoric was great and generous, Roman in its completeness and in its largeness; but he did not succeed in establishing a new kingdom, a new nation of Goths and Romans in Italy. Why?

The answer to that question must be given and it is this: Theodoric and his Goths were Arians. Much more than race or nationality religion forms and inspires a people, welds them into one or divides them asunder. Even though there had been no visible difference in culture and civilisation between the Goths, when for a generation they had been settled south of the Alps, and the Romans of the plain and of Italy, nevertheless they would have remained barbarians, for Arianism at this time was the certain mark of barbarism.[3] Had the barbarians not fallen into this strange heresy, had the Goths,

[1] Cassiodorus, *op cit.* iii. 9. Trs. Hodgkin, *op. cit.*

[2] Cassiodorus, *op. cit.* v. 8.

[3] Heathenism even more so of course. It cannot be altogether a coincidence that those barbarians which first became Catholic, though they had been ruder and rougher than the rest, were destined to re-establish the empire in the West—the Franks.

THE MAUSOLEUM OF THEODORIC.

above all, been Catholics, who knows what new nation might have arisen upon the ruin of the Western empire to create, more than five hundred years before, as things were, it was to blossom, the rose of the Middle Age?

But this was not to be. The work of Theodoric, a useful work as we shall see, was serving quite another purpose than that of establishing a new Gothic kingdom. As for him and his government, they were utterly to pass away and by reason of the religion they professed.

The first blow at the endurance and security of the Ostrogothic hegemony was the conversion of Clovis to Catholicism in 496. This changed the political relations, not only of every state in Gaul, but of every state in Europe, and enormously to the disadvantage of the Arians. The second was the reconciliation, in 519, of the pope and the emperor, which rightly understood was the death warrant of the Gothic kingdom. Had the Goths been Catholic, either that reconciliation would not have taken place, or it would have been without ill results for them. As it was it was fatal, though not all at once.

The Arian heresy, if we are to understand it aright, must be recognised as an orientalism having much in common with Judaism and the later Mahometanism. It denied several of the statements of the Nicene Creed, those monoliths upon which the new Europe was to be founded. It maintained that the Father and the Son are distinct Beings; that the Son though divine is not equal to the Father; that the Son had a state of existence previous to His appearance upon earth, but is not from Eternity; that Christ Jesus was not really man but a divine being in a case of flesh. Already against it the future frowned dark and enormous as the Alps.

Such was the heresy at the root of the Ostrogothic kingdom, and it is significant that the cause of the first open alienation between Theodoric and the Catholics of Italy was concerned with the Jews. It seems that the Jews, whom Theodoric had always protected, had, during his absence from Ravenna,

mocked the Christian rite of baptism and made sport of it by throwing one another into one of the two muddy rivers of that city, and also by some blasphemous foolishness aimed at the Mass. The Catholic population had naturally retaliated by burning all the Jewish synagogues to the ground. Theodoric, like all the Gothic Arians, sided with the Jews and fined the Catholic citizens of Ravenna, publicly flogging those who could not pay, in order that the synagogues might be rebuilt. Such was the first open breach between the king and the Romans, who now began to remind themselves that there was an Augustus at Constantinople. This memory, which had slumbered while pope and emperor were in conflict —such is the creative and formative power of religion—was stirred and strengthened by the reconciliation between the emperor Justin and the Holy See. It is curious that the man who was to lead the Catholic party and to suffer in the national cause had translated thirty books of Aristotle into Latin; his name was Boethius and he was master of the offices.

This great and pathetic figure had been till the year 523 continually in the favour of Theodoric. In that year suddenly an accusation was brought against the patrician Albinus of "sending letters to the emperor Justin hostile to the royal rule of Theodoric." In the debate which followed, Boethius claimed to speak and declared that the accusation was false, "but whatever Albinus did, I and the whole senate of Rome with one purpose did the same." We may well ask for a clear statement of what they had done; we shall get no answer. Boethius himself speaks of "the accusation against me of having hoped for Roman freedom," and adds: "As for Roman freedom, what hope is left to us of that? Would that there were any such hope." To the charge of "hoping for Roman freedom" was added an accusation of sorcery.

Boethius was tried in the senate house in Rome while he was lying in prison in Pavia. Without being permitted to answer his accusers or to be heard by his judges he was sentenced to death by the intimidated senate whose freedom

he was accused of seeking to establish. From Pavia, where in prison awaiting death he had written his *De Consolatione Philosophiæ* which was so largely to inform the new Europe, he was carried to "the *ager Calventianus*" a few miles from Milan; there he was tortured, a cord was twisted round his forehead till his eyes burst from their sockets, and then he was clubbed to death. This occurred in 524, and in that same year throughout the empire we find the great movement against Arianism take on new life.

CAPITAL FROM S. VITALE

This irresistible attack began in the East and Theodoric seems at once to have seen in it the culmination of all those dangers he had to fear. He recognised, too, at last, that it was Catholicism he had to face. Therefore he sent for pope John I. When the pope, old and infirm, appeared in Ravenna, Theodoric made the greatest diplomatic mistake of his life. He bade the pope go to Constantinople to the emperor and tell him that "he must not in any way attempt to win over those whom he calls heretics to the Catholic religion."

Apart from the impertinence of this command to the emperor from the king of the Goths, it was foolish in the extreme. His object should have been, above all else, to keep the emperor and the pope apart, but by this act he forced

them together; only anger can have suggested such an impolitic move. "The king," says the chronicler,[1] "returning in great anger [from the murder of Boethius] and unmindful of the blessings of God, considered that he might frighten Justin by an embassy. Therefore he sent for John the chief of the Apostolic See to Ravenna and said to him, 'Go to Justin the emperor and tell him that among other things he must restore the converted heretics to the (Arian) faith.' And the pope answered, 'What thou doest do quickly. Behold here I stand in thy sight. I will not promise to do this thing for thee nor to say this to the emperor. But in other matters, with God's help, I may succeed.' Then the king being angered ordered a ship to be prepared and placed the pope aboard together with other bishops, namely, Ecclesius of Ravenna, Eusebius of Fano, Sabinus of Campania, and two others with the following senators, Theodorus, Importunus, Agapitus, and another Agapitus. But God, who does not forsake those who are faithful, brought them prosperously to their journey's end. Then the emperor Justin met the pope on his arrival as though he were St. Peter himself,[2] and when he heard his message promised that he would comply with all his requests, but *the converts who had given themselves to the Catholic Faith he could by no means restore to the Arians.*"

That was a great day not only for the papacy but for Italy. The pope can never have hoped that Theodoric would open to him so great an opportunity for confirming the reconciliation between the emperor and the papacy which was the great need of the Latin cause. There can be little doubt that pope John used his advantage to the utmost. Early in 526 he returned to Ravenna to find Theodoric beside himself

[1] Anon. Valesii, *ut supra.*

[2] "Prone on the ground the emperor, whom all other men adored, adored the weary pontiff. . . . When Easter-day came, the pope, taking the place of honour at the right hand of the patriarch of Constantinople, celebrated Mass according to the Latin use in the great cathedral." —Marcellinus Comes, quoted by Hodgkin, *op. cit.* iii. p. 463.

with anger. The barbarian who had perfidiously murdered Odoacer his rival, and most foully tortured the old philosopher Boethius to death, was not likely to shrink from any outrage that he thought might serve him, even though his victim were the pope. Symmachus, the father-in-law of Boethius, a venerable and a saintly man, was barbarously done to death and Pope John and his colleagues were thrown into prison in Ravenna, where the pope died on May 18 of that same year, and one hundred and four days later was followed to the grave by the unhappy Gothic king.

CAPITAL FROM SANTO SPIRITO

Theodoric had utterly failed in everything he had attempted. His Romano-Gothic kingdom proved to be a hopeless chimæra, and this because he had not been able to understand the forces with which he had to deal. Nor was he capable of learning from experience. Even after the death of Pope John he countersigned the death warrant of his kingdom by an edict, issued with the signature of a Jewish treasury clerk, that all the Catholic churches of Italy should be handed over to the Arians. He had scarcely published this amazing document, however, when he died after three days of pain on August 30, 526, the very day the revolution was to have taken place.

The Gothic king was buried outside Ravenna upon the

north-east and in the mighty tomb—a truly Roman work—that the Romans, at his orders, had prepared for him: a marvellous mausoleum of squared stones in two stories, the lower a decagon, the upper an octagon covered by a vast dome hewn out of a single block of Istrian marble. There in a porphyry vase reposed all that was mortal of the great barbarian who failed to understand what the Roman empire was, but who almost without knowing it rendered it, as we shall see, so great a service. But the body of Theodoric did not long remain in the enormous silence of that sepulchre. Even in the time of Agnellus (ninth century) the body was no longer in the mausoleum and what had become of it will always remain a mystery. A weird and awful legend, in keeping with the tremendous tragedy that was played out in his time and in which he had filled the main rôle, relates how a holy hermit upon the island of Lipari on the day and in the hour of the great king's death saw him, his hands and feet bound, his garments all disarrayed, dragged up the mountain of Stromboli by his two victims, pope John and Symmachus, the father-in-law of Boethius, and hurled by them into the fiery crater of the volcano.

Agnellus, of Ravenna, who records that the body of Theodoric was no longer in the great mausoleum, tells us that as it seems to him it was cast forth out of that sepulchre. A later suggestion would lead us to suppose that this was done by the monks of a neighbouring monastery, who are said to have cast the body in its golden armour into the Canale Corsini close by.[1] A few pieces of a golden cuirass discovered there and now in the museum of Ravenna, seem to confirm this story, which certainly is not unreasonable though of course it is the merest conjecture. It is possible that the body of Theodoric did not rest

[1] There is apparently no foundation for the assertion of Fra Salimbene, the thirteenth-century chronicler of Parma (*Cronica*, ed. Holder-Egger, pp. 209-210), that it was S. Gregory the Great himself who ordered the body of Theodoric to be cast forth from its tomb. Cf. E. G. Gardner: *The Dialogues of S. Gregory* (1911), p. 273.

longer in its tomb than the Gothic power remained in Italy. For already within a year of the death of Theodoric the new saviour had appeared. Once more a great man sat upon the throne of the empire, in whose mind and in whose will was set the dream of the reconquest, of the re-establishment of the empire through the West, of the promulgation of the great code by which the new Europe was to realise itself. Justinian reigned in the New Rome upon the Bosphorus.

VII

THE RECONQUEST

VITIGES, BELISARIUS, TOTILA, NARSES

THE failure of Theodoric, the failure of barbarism, of Arianism that is, for barbarism and civilisation were now for all intents and purposes mere synonyms for heresy and Catholicism, was probably fully appreciated by the Gothic king, who was, nevertheless, incapable of mastering his fate. The great lady who succeeded to his power in Italy as the guardian of her son, his heir, Athalaric, was certainly as fully aware as Theodoric may have been of the cause of that failure, and she made the attempt, which he had not wished or dared to make, to save the kingdom. The value of her heroic effort, which, for all its courage, utterly failed, lies for us in the confirmation it gives to our analysis of the causes of the Gothic failure to establish an enduring government in the West.

That Amalasuntha wished to become a Catholic is probably true enough; it is certain that she understood from the first that, in such an act, she would not be able to carry her people with her. Therefore, she did what she could short of this the only real remedy. She attempted to educate her little son as a Roman, and hoped thus to insure his power with the Latin population, trusting that the fact of his birth would perhaps ensure the loyalty of the Gothic nation. In this she was wholly to fail, because, as her attempt shows, she

had not fundamentally understood, any more than her father had been able to do, the realities of the situation in which she found herself.

For all her genuine love for Roman things, her contempt of Gothic rudeness and barbarism, she failed to see that the one living thing that impressed the Roman mind, and really differentiated the Latin from the Goth, was religion, was Catholicism. She remained, possibly from necessity, but she remained, an Arian, and though she brought Athalaric up "in all respects after the manner of the Romans," she did not make him a Catholic, nor did she attempt the certainly hopeless task of leading the Gothic nation towards the only means of reconciliation that might have been successful.

The compromise she adopted was useless and futile, and only succeeded in alienating the Goths, without winning her a single ally among the Romans. Her own people utterly disapproved of her method of education for her son, their king, "because they wished him to be trained in more barbaric style so that they might the more readily oppress their subjects." Presently they remonstrated with her: "O Lady, you are not dealing justly with us, nor doing what is best for the nation when you thus educate your son. Letters and book-learning are different from courage and fortitude, and to permit a boy to be trained by old men is the way to make him a coward and a fool. He who is to dare and to win glory, and fame, must not be subjected to the fear of a pedagogue, but must spend his time in martial exercise. Your father, Theodoric, would never suffer his Goths to send their sons to the grammarians, for he used to say: 'If they fear the teacher's strap they will never look on sword or javelin without a shudder.' He himself, who won the lordship of such wide lands and died king of so fair a kingdom, which he had not inherited from his fathers, knew nothing, even by hearsay, of book learning. Therefore, lady, you must say 'good-bye' to these pedagogues, and give Athalaric companions of his own age, who may grow up with him to

manhood, and make him a valiant king after the manner of the barbarians." [1]

Amalasuntha was forced to bow to this, the public opinion of her own people. The result was disastrous; for the young Athalaric, like a true barbarian, was soon led away into a bestial sensuality which presently destroyed his health and sent him to an early grave. Seeing his instability both of body and mind, Amalasuntha entered into secret communication with Constantinople, where Justinian was now emperor, and even prepared for a possible flight to that city. Thus in 534, when she received an ambassador in Ravenna from Justinian who demanded of her the surrender of Lilybæum, a barren rock in Sicily which Theodoric had assigned to Thrasamund on his marriage with his sister Amalafrida, in public she protested vigorously against the attempt of the emperor to pick a quarrel with "an orphaned king" too young to defend himself; but in private she assured the imperial ambassador of her readiness "to transfer to the emperor the whole of Italy."

Italy was in this unstable state when, on the 2nd October 534, Athalaric died in his eighteenth year. This apparently upset Amalasuntha's plans. At any rate, we see her suddenly face quite about and sending for Theodahad, the son of Amalafrida, upon whom she had but lately pronounced a humiliating sentence, she offered to make him her official colleague upon the Gothic throne. This man was an ambitious villain. Of course he accepted Amalasuntha's foolish offer and swore to observe the agreement made between them. But before many weeks had passed he had made her a prisoner and had her securely hidden upon an island in the Lake of Bolsena in Umbria. But Theodahad appears to have been a fool as well as a villain. Having disposed of Amalasuntha, he sent an embassy to Constantinople to explain his conduct and to attempt to come to terms with Cæsar. For his ambassadors he chose not Gothic nobles, who might

[1] Hodgkin, *Theodoric* (Putnam, 1900), pp. 307-308.

have found his actions to their advantage, but Roman senators, all but one of whom told a plain tale. Justinian immediately despatched his ambassador Peter to reassure Amalasuntha of his protection and to threaten Theodahad that if she were hurt it would be at the price of his own head. Peter, however, had scarcely landed in Italy when he had news of Amalasuntha's murder in her island prison. He continued at once on his way to Ravenna, and there in the court before all the Gothic nobles not only denounced the murderer, but declared "truceless war" upon the Goths.[1]

The truth was that Justinian was ready, the hour had struck, and with the hour had appeared the man who with his great master was ready to attempt the reconquest of the West for civilisation.

We shall see the true state of affairs from the point of view of Constantinople if we retrace our steps a little.

Justinian had succeeded Justin upon the imperial throne in 527. This great man had early set before himself the real recovery of the West for the empire. Circumstances, which he was not slow to use, caused him to attempt first the reconquest of Africa from the Vandals, and the true state of affairs is disclosed by the causes which brought about this great campaign.

Hilderic, who had succeeded Thrasamund on the Vandal throne in Africa, had put Amalafrida, the queen dowager, the sister of Theodoric, to death. In June 531, he was deposed. Now Hilderic favoured the Catholics, was the ally of the empire, and was descended on his mother's side from the great Theodosius. Justinian determined to avenge him, and in avenging him to reconquer Africa for the empire. The hour had struck as I say, and the man had appeared with

[1] Cf. Procopius, *De Bello Gotico*, 25. The murder of Amalasuntha served the interests of the imperialists so well that public opinion at Constantinople attributed it to Peter the ambassador and to Theodora, the wife of Justinian. It remains, however, extremely doubtful whether there is any truth in this accusation, although it is certain that Theodora was in communication with Theodahad.

the hour. That man was the great soldier Belisarius, the instrument of Justinian in all his heroic design.

Belisarius was entirely successful in his African campaign. On 15th September 533, he entered Carthage, and "was received by the majority of the citizens who spoke the Latin tongue and professed the Catholic Faith with unconcealed rejoicing." And as it happened he entered Carthage only to hear of Hilderic's murder. Before the end of the year the reconquest was complete. Africa was once more and in reality a province of the empire, and offered an excellent base of operations for the conquest of Italy, now to be undertaken.

In the summer of 535, eighteen months later, Justinian began the great war against the Goths, the opportunity for which was offered him by the murder of Amalasuntha, and the result of which was to be the re-establishment of the empire in Italy. Rightly understood the true service of Theodoric—and it was a real and a precious service—was that the thirty years of settled government and peace which he had given Italy had prepared the way for the reconquest.

That reconquest occupied five years. It was begun with an attack upon Sicily and proceeded northward by way of Naples and Rome to Ravenna, with the fall of which it was achieved. From a purely strategical point of view Belisarius was wrong to attack Sicily first and to carry the campaign from south to north; he should have attacked Ravenna first, and from the sea, and thus possessed himself of the key of Italy, and this especially as his base was Constantinople. But politically he was absolutely right. Sicily was almost empty of Gothic troops and the provincials were eagerly Catholic and only too willing to make a real part of the Roman empire. Thus the campaign opened with surrender after surrender, was indeed almost a procession; only Palermo offered resistance, and this because it was held by a garrison of Goths; but before the end of 535 the whole island was once more subject to the empire.

Early in 536 a rebellion in Africa, which proved to be

little more than a mutiny in Carthage, took Belisarius away; but he was back in Sicily before the end of the spring, and in the early summer was marching through southern Italy almost unresisted, welcomed everywhere with joy and thanksgiving till he came to the fortress of Naples, which was held by a Gothic garrison. Here the people wished to welcome him and surrender the city, but were prevented by the garrison, which, however, was soon cleverly outwitted and taken prisoner, and by the end of November all southern Italy was in Belisarius' hands.

The fall of Naples brought Theodahad to the ground. The Goths deposed him and raised upon their shields Vitiges the soldier. As for Theodahad he was overtaken on the road to Ravenna, whither he was flying, and his throat was cut as he lay on the pavement of the way, "as a priest cuts the throat of his victim."

If Theodahad was a villain as well as a fool, perhaps Vitiges was only the latter. At any rate, he is generally considered to have acted with criminal folly, when, as the first act of his reign, he abandoned Rome and fell back upon Ravenna, determined to make his great defence in northern Italy. But I think, if we consider the position more closely, we shall see that Vitiges was not such a fool as he looks. He had seen the two great fortresses of Palermo and Naples fall, and mainly for the same reason, the fact that the whole of their populations except the Gothic garrisons were eagerly on the side of the enemy. The situation of Rome, its great size, made it difficult to defend except with a very great army, and this would become a hundred times more difficult, if not impossible, if the population were to side with the attack. Yet not only was that already certain, but the sympathies of the citizens there might be expected to be even more passionately Roman than others had been elsewhere; for Rome was the capital of Catholicism, the throne of the Church, the seat of Peter. The Goth had to face the fact that, while he was perhaps hardly holding his own in Rome, Belisarius might

stealthily pass on to overthrow the Gothic citadel at Ravenna. He had to ask himself whether he could expect to defend both Rome and Ravenna, for if Ravenna were to fall the whole kingdom was lost, since now, not less but rather more than before, Ravenna was the key to Italy.

There is this also; Justinian had in the summer of 535 despatched two armies from Constantinople. One of these was that which Belisarius had disembarked in Sicily, and which till now had been so uniformly and so easily victorious. The other under Mundus had entered Dalmatia which it had completely wrested from the Goths by the middle of 536. It is probable that Vitiges expected to be attacked in the rear and from the north by this victorious army. If that should fall upon Ravenna while the Gothic strength was engaged in the defence of Rome, what would be the fate of that principal city, and with that lost, what would become of him in the Catholic capital?

Of course Vitiges ought to have met the imperial army in the field and given battle. That was the true solution. But no Gothic army ever dared to face Belisarius in the open, for though the Goths enormously outnumbered his small force of some 8000 men, they feared him as the possessor of a superior arm in the *Hippotoxotai*, mounted troops armed with the bow, and above all they feared his genius.

But Vitiges was no fool; his cause was hopeless from the first. He abandoned Rome and fell back upon Ravenna, because that was the best thing to be done in the circumstances in which he found himself. Among these must be reckoned the newness of his authority and the necessity of consolidating it by a marriage with a princess of the blood of Theodoric. As it happened, this retreat enabled him to prolong a war that at first looked like coming to an end in a few months for four more years.

Vitiges then abandoned Rome, but it seems not altogether. What he may be supposed to have imagined Belisarius doing to his disadvantage, that he himself did. He left in Rome a

garrison of four thousand men under a veteran general Leudaris, while he himself with the Gothic army fell back upon Ravenna. No sooner was he gone than the surrender of the City was offered to Belisarius by pope Silverius who spoke for the citizens and the Roman people. This was the reality of the situation. Then indeed an almost incredible blunder was committed, but not by Vitiges. The four thousand Goths whom he had left to hold the City, and at least to delay and waste the imperialists, marched out of Rome along the Flaminian Way as Belisarius entered from the south by the Via Latina. Leudaris alone refused to quit this post. He was taken prisoner, and sent with the keys of the Eternal City to Justinian.

Belisarius established himself upon the Pincian Hill, and his first act after his occupation of the City is significant both of his profound knowledge of the barbarians and of the immutable characteristics of a Latin people.

It is possible that the Romans, seeing the fall of Palermo and Naples and the occupation of Rome itself obtained so easily, believed that the Goths were finally disposed of. But Belisarius' vast experience of the character of the barbarians taught him otherwise. He immediately began to provision Rome from Sicily as fast as he could, and he at once undertook the fortification of the City, the repair of the Aurelian Wall. In these acts of Belisarius two things become evident. We see that he expected the return of the Goths, and we are made aware of the fact that they had neglected to fortify the City.

It must be well seized by the reader, that the Gothic armies very greatly outnumbered the imperial troops, who were but a small expedition of not more than eight thousand men face to face with an immense horde of barbarians. The great advantage of the imperialists was that they were fighting in a friendly country, and they had too certain superiorities of armament which civilisation may always depend upon having at its command as against barbarians. Nevertheless,

Belisarius knew that his end would be more securely won if he could wear down the barbarians, always impatient of so slow a business as a siege, from behind fortifications. He expected the barbarians, unstable in judgment and impatient of any but the simplest strategy and tactics, to swarm again and again about the City, and he was right: what he expected came to pass.

On the other hand, we see in the neglect on the part of the Goths of all fortification of the City a neglect instantly repaired by Belisarius, a characteristic persistent and perhaps ineradicable in the Teutonic mind from the days of Tacitus to our own time. The Romans had always asserted, and those nations to-day who are of their tradition still assert, that the spade is the indispensable weapon of the soldier. But the barbarians and those nations to-day who are of their tradition, while they have not been so foolish as to refuse the spade altogether, have always fortified reluctantly. You see these two characteristics at work to-day in the opposite methods of the French and the Germans, just as you see them at work in the sixth century when Belisarius rebuilt the fortifications of the City which the Goths had neglected.

And if we have praised Vitiges for his retreat upon Ravenna, how much more must we praise Belisarius for the fortification of Rome. For if the one had for its result the prolongation of the war for some four years, the other determined what the end of that war should be.

Let us once more consider the military situation. It is evident that Vitiges evacuated Rome because he was afraid of losing Ravenna, his base, by an outflanking movement on the part of Belisarius and perhaps by a new attack from Dalmatia.[1]

In leaving a garrison within the City of some four thousand

[1] My theory of the strategy of Vitiges and of his purpose is perhaps unorthodox; the orthodox theory being that he was a fool and the abandonment of Rome a mere blunder. But my theory would seem to be accurate enough, for Vitiges's first act from Ravenna was to despatch an army into Dalmatia.

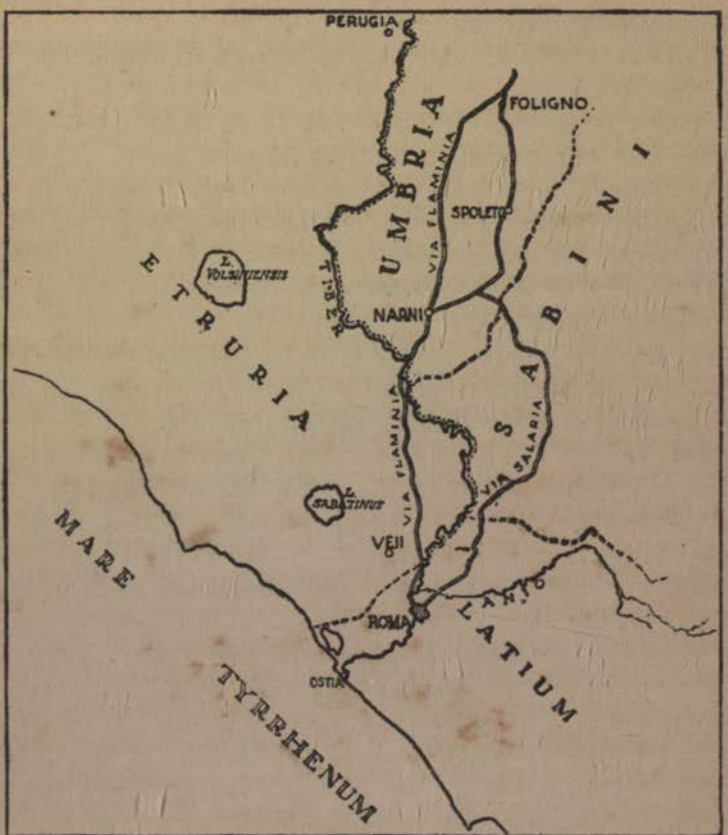
men—say half as many as the whole imperialist army—he at least hoped to delay the enemy till he had secured himself in the north and to waste him. I do not think he expected to hold the city for any length of time, for the whole country was spiritually with the enemy.

What he hoped to gain by his retreat was, however, not merely the security of the north. He hoped also to lure Belisarius thither after him where, in a country less wholly Latin and imperialist, he would have a better chance of annihilating him by mere numbers once and for all. To this supreme hope and expectation of the Goth's, the refortification of Rome by Belisarius finally put an end. It was a counter-move worthy of such a master and entirely in keeping with the Roman tradition.

At first it must have appeared to Vitiges that the course he had expected Belisarius to pursue was actually being followed; for presently the imperialists began to move up the Flaminian Way. But it was soon evident that this was no advance in force, but rather a part of the fortification of the City. All the places occupied were fortresses and all were with one exception upon the Via Flaminia which they commanded. The first of these strong places was Narni, which held the great bridge over the Nera at the southern exit of the passes between the valley of Spoleto and the lower Tiber valley, where the two roads over the mountains, one by Todi, the other by Spoleto, met. The second place occupied was Spoleto at the head, and the third was Perugia at the foot, of the great valley of Spoleto, from which the Via Flaminia rose to cross the central Apennines. The three places were occupied without much trouble, and it was thus attempted to make the great road from the north impassable.

If Vitiges, as I believe, thought the imperialists would immediately follow him northward he was no more deceived than the Romans themselves. They had surrendered the City to Belisarius to save it from attack and the last thing they desired was to suffer a siege. A feeling of resentment,

the old jealousy of Constantinople, seems to have appeared, and in this Vitiges thought he saw his opportunity. With 150,000 men, according to Procopius, he issued from Ravenna



VITIGES, MARCH

and marched upon Rome, avoiding apparently the three forts held by the imperialists, for he came, again according to Procopius, through Sabine territory and therefore his advance was upon the eastern bank of the Tiber. However that may be, he got without being attacked as far as the bridge over

the Anio on the Via Salaria, or as the Milvian Bridge over the Tiber where the Via Cassia and the Via Flaminia meet to enter the City.[1] This bridge, whichever it was, Belisarius had determined to hold, but without his knowledge it was deserted. The Goths were crossing unopposed when the general himself appeared with 1000 horse. A tremendous fight followed in which, such was his rage and astonishment, Belisarius bore himself rather like a brave soldier than a wise general. Unhurt in spite of the *mêlée* he fell back either upon the Porta Salaria [2] or upon the Porta Flaminia (del Popolo), which he found closed against him, for the City believed him dead. Almost in despair he rallied his men and made a desperate charge, which, such was the number of the Goths in the road and the confusion of their advance, was successful. The barbarians fled and Belisarius and his gallant troopers entered the City at nightfall.

All through that night the walls of Rome were aflame with watchfires and disastrous tidings, happily false; and when the dawn rose out of the Campagna, Rome was still inviolate.

Thus began the first siege of Rome in the early days of March 537. It lasted for three hundred and seventy-four days and ended in the sullen retreat of the barbarians to save Ravenna, which as Vitiges had at first foreseen would happen was threatened with attack. But as so often in later times, those three hundred and seventy-four days had dealt incomparably more hardly with the besiegers than with the besieged. The Campagna had done its work, and it has been calculated that of the 150,000 men that are said to have marched with Vitiges to attack the city, not more than 10,000 returned to Ravenna.

Meanwhile during the great siege Belisarius, by means of his subordinate general, John, had carried on a campaign in

[1] Procopius tells us both that Vitiges advanced through the Sabine country and that he crossed the Tiber—an impossible thing. Gibbon and Hodgkin refuse the former, Gregorovius the latter statement. I agree with Gregorovius, for Procopius confuses the Tiber and Anio elsewhere, notably iii. 10. [2] Possibly the Porta Pinciana.

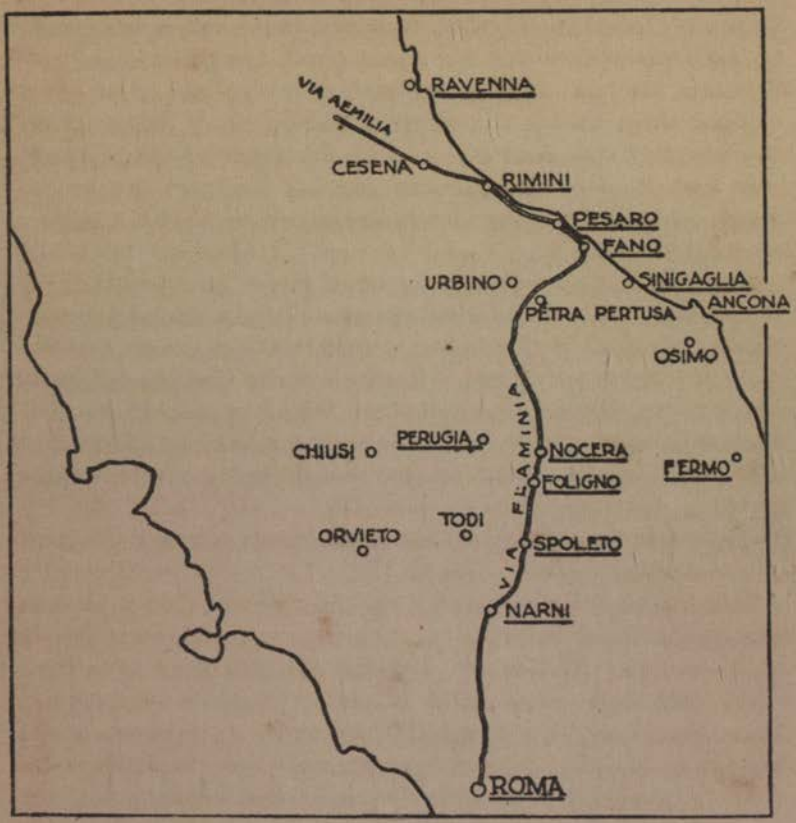
Picenum and had been able to send assistance to the people of Milan, eagerly Roman as they were.

In Picenum, John had perhaps rashly pushed forward from Ancona to Rimini; which he held precariously and to the danger of Ancona. The first act of Belisarius after the raising of the siege of the City was to despatch troops post haste to Rimini. He sent Ildiger and Martin with a thousand horse to fight their way if necessary to Rimini to withdraw John and his two thousand horse. He purposed to hold Rimini only with the tips of his fingers, for his determination was to secure all he held before he entered upon a final and a real advance northward.

The position of Belisarius seemed more insecure than in fact it was. If we consider the great artery of his advance northward, the Via Flaminia, we shall find that he held everything to the east of the road between Rome and Ancona save one fortress, Osimo above Ancona, which was held by four thousand of the enemy. But all was or seemed to be insecure because he held nothing to the west of the great road save Perugia: Orvieto, Todi, Chiusi, Urbino were all in Gothic hands, while the Furlo Pass over the Apennines was also held by the enemy.

Well might Belisarius desire the cavalry of John, useless in Rimini, for the direct road to that city was still in the hands of the enemy. But when John got his orders he refused to obey them and Ildiger and Martin returned without him. What excuse is possible for this refusal of obedience on the part of a subordinate which might well have imperilled the whole campaign? This only: that he had orders from one superior even to Belisarius. It is probable that John in Rimini and Ancona was aware that he might expect reinforcement from Constantinople and that Belisarius knew nothing of them. These reinforcements arrived under Narses, the great and famous chamberlain of Justinian, not long after Rimini had begun to suffer the memorable siege that followed the departure of Ildiger and Martin, and Ancona had only

just been saved. The presence of Narses in Italy changed the whole aspect of the campaign, and whatever motives Justinian may have had for sending him thither, the effect of his landing



CITIES UNDERLINED WERE IN IMPERIAL HANDS

at Ancona with great reinforcements can have had only a good effect upon the war.

Belisarius had now secured himself to this extent that Todi and Chiusi were in his hands, and he hastened to meet Narses at Fermo forty miles south of Ancona. There a

council of war was held in which Belisarius maintained his plan, namely, that Rimini should be abandoned because Osimo, very strongly held over Ancona, was in the hands of the Goths. Narses, on the contrary, looked only to the spiritual side of war. He maintained that if a city once recovered for the empire was abandoned the moral result would be disastrous. At any cost he was for the relief of Rimini. Somewhat reluctantly, realising the danger, Belisarius consented to try. A screen of a thousand men was placed before Osimo, an army was embarked for Rimini and another was sent out by the coast road, while Belisarius himself and Narses with a column of cavalry set out from Fermo westward, crossed the Apennines above Spoleto, struck into the Flaminian Way, recrossed the Apennines by the Furlo, and had come within a day's journey of Rimini when they came upon a party of Goths, who fled and gave the alarm to Vitiges. But before the Goth could decide what to do, Ildiger was upon him from the sea, Martin was upon him with a great army from the south, and Belisarius and Narses came down from the mountains in time to rejoice at the delivery of the city.

That deliverance but disclosed the two parties that divided the imperial army. When John refused obedience to Belisarius we may be sure he was not acting wholly without encouragement, and this at once became obvious after the deliverance of Rimini which Belisarius had carried out but which had been conceived by Narses. It will be remembered that Milan was by the act of Belisarius in the hands of the Romans; it was, however, now besieged even as Rimini had been by a very redoubtable Gothic leader, Uraius. Orvieto and Osimo also were still in barbarian hands. Belisarius now proposed to employ the army in the relief of the one and the capture of the others. Narses, on the other hand, proposed to take his part of the army and with it to reoccupy the province of Æmilia between the Apennines and the Po. These rivalries and differences were to cost the life of a great city, Milan. For since Narses would not consent to the plan of

Belisarius, only what seemed most urgent was done; Orvieto was taken, Urbino too, and the energy of the imperial army and its purpose, also, was expended upon many unimportant things, an attempt upon Cesena, the reduction of Imola, which involved a hopeless dispersal of forces upon no great end. Belisarius, warned of the danger, ordered John to the relief of Milan; again that creature of Narses refused. And down came Milan before Uraius the Goth, who fell upon the helpless citizens and massacred three hundred thousand of them, being all the men of the city; and the women he gave as payment to his Burgundian ally; and of Milan he left not one stone upon another. But when Justinian read the despatch of Belisarius, he recalled Narses, for if the fall of Rimini would have injured so sorely the imperial cause, what of the fall of Milan, the massacre of its inhabitants, the utter destruction of the city? So great was its effect that we read even Justinian thought of treating with the Goths; for he was haunted by the weakness of his Persian frontier, and he had soon to look to the western Alps.

Not so Belisarius. He went on his way and first he reduced two fortresses that had long threatened him, Osimo and Fiesole, and then and at long last he began the great advance upon Ravenna.

In this he was attempting with a small and weary force what had never before been accomplished. Theodoric, it is true, had entered Ravenna as a conqueror, but only by stratagem and deceptive promises after a siege of three years. Belisarius, none knew it better than he, had neither the time nor the forces that were at the disposal of the great Gothic king. He must act quickly if at all, and nowhere and on no occasion does this great and resourceful man appear to better advantage than in his achievement at Ravenna, which should have been the last military action of the reconquest.

Procopius, who was perhaps an eye-witness of the whole business of the siege and certainly entered Ravenna in triumph with Belisarius, tells us that, after the fall of Osimo, Belisarius

made haste to Ravenna with his whole army. He sent one of his generals, Magnus, before him with a sufficient force, to march along the Po and to prevent provisions being taken into the impregnable city from the Æmilian Way; while another general, Vitalius, he called out of Dalmatia with his forces to hold the northern bank of the river. When this was done a most extraordinary accident occurred which it seems impossible to explain. "An accident then befell," says Procopius, "which clearly shows that Fortuna determines even yet every struggle. For the Goths had brought down the Po many barges from Liguria[1] laden with corn, bound for Ravenna; but the water suddenly grew so low in the river that they could not row on; and the Romans coming upon them took them and all their lading. Soon after the river had again its wonted stream and was navigable as before. This scarcity of water had never till then occurred so far as we could hear."

Owing to this accident and the closeness of the investment the Goths began to be short of provisions, for they could import nothing from the sea, since the Romans were masters there. In their need, however, the King of the Franks, knowing how things were, sent ambassadors to Vitiges in Ravenna, and so did Belisarius. The Franks offered to lead an army of five hundred thousand men over the Alps and to bury the Romans in utter ruin if the Goths would consent to share Italy with them. But the Goths feared the Franks, and the ambassadors of Belisarius were able to persuade them to reject their offers. From this time forward negotiations went on without ceasing between Belisarius and the Goths, for the one was short of time, the other of food. Nevertheless, the Romans did not relax their investment of the city in any way. Indeed, Belisarius chose this moment for his shrewdest and

[1] Cf. Cassiodorus, *Variæ*, ii. 20, where we read of Theodoric in a time of scarcity supplying Liguria with food from Ravenna. "Let any provision ships which may be now lying at Ravenna be ordered round to Liguria, which in ordinary times supplies the needs of Ravenna herself."

cruellest blow. "For hearing how there was much corn in the public magazines of Ravenna, he won a citizen with money to set them afire; which loss, some say, happened by Matasuntha's advice, the wife of Vitiges. It was so suddenly done that some thought it was by lightning, as others by design, and Vitiges and the Goths, taking it in either kind, fell into more irresolution, mistrusting one another, and thinking that God himself made war against them."

At this misfortune Uraius, the destroyer of Milan, proposed to attempt to relieve Ravenna, but Belisarius easily outwitted him and his intervention came to nothing.

Nevertheless time, so scarce with the Romans, was running short. Justinian was impatient to have done with the Italian war, for the general situation was extremely grave; upon the Danube an invasion of Slavs was gathering; in Asia, Persia threatened the empire. It is not altogether surprising then that Justinian now made an attempt to come to terms with Vitiges behind the back of Belisarius. He sent two ambassadors to offer peace upon the following really amazing terms, namely, that the Goths were to have half the royal treasure and the dominion of the country beyond the Po, that is to say, to the north of the Po; the other half of the revenues and the rest of Italy with Sicily were to be the emperor's. The ambassadors showed their instructions to Belisarius, who had them conducted into Ravenna, where Vitiges and the Goths gladly consented to make peace and to accept these conditions. But both sides had reckoned without Belisarius, who doubtless saw that such a peace could not endure and that all his labour, if such terms were to be made, had gone for nothing. Nothing would satisfy his ideas of security save the absolute defeat of the Goths with its natural sequel, the bringing of Vitiges to Constantinople as a prisoner. He, therefore, refused to sign the treaty, leaving it to be established by the ambassadors alone. But when the Goths saw this they thought that the Romans cozened them, and refused to conclude anything without the signature and oath of Belisarius.

That Belisarius was right we cannot doubt; but his action naturally laid him open to be accused of a design, against the emperor's intentions, to prolong the war for his own glory. Nor were certain of his generals slow to make such an accusation. When he heard of it, he (who had suffered more than enough from the disloyalty of subordinates) called them all together, and in the presence of the ambassadors confessed that Fortune was the great decider of war, and that a good opportunity for peace should ever be seized. Then he bade them speak their minds in the present case. They declared then, one and all, that it were best to follow the instructions of the emperor. When Belisarius heard them speak thus he was glad and bade them put their opinions in writing, that neither he nor they might afterwards deny their confession that they were not able to subdue the enemy by war.

But Belisarius was sure of his ground. The Goths pressed by famine could hold out no longer, and weary of Vitiges, who had given them no success, yet afraid of yielding to the emperor lest he should remove them out of Italy to Constantinople and thereabout, they resolved, of all things, to declare Belisarius emperor in the West. Secretly they sent to entreat him to accept the empire, professing to be most willing to obey him. Such an astonishing proposal must have filled Belisarius with delight. He, indeed, had no intention of receiving from such hands a gift so fantastic, for he hated the name of usurper; but he saw at once how this proposal might help his ends. He immediately called his generals and the ambassadors together and asked them if they did not think it a matter of importance to make all the Goths and Vitiges the emperor's captives, to capture their wealth, and to recover all Italy to the Romans. They answered it would be an extreme high fortune and bade him effect it if he could. Then Belisarius sent to the Goths and bade them perform what they had offered. And they, for the famine was too hard to bear, agreed and sent ambassadors to take the oath of the great Roman for their indemnity

and that he would be King of Italy, and when they had it, to return into Ravenna with the Roman army. Now as to their indemnity Belisarius bound himself, but touching the kingdom he said he would swear it to Vitiges himself and the Gothic commanders. And the ambassadors, not thinking he would forego the kingdom, but that he desired it above all things, prayed him forthwith to march into Ravenna. And he himself with his army and the Gothic ambassadors entered Ravenna; and he commanded also ships to be laden with corn and to come into Classis.

"When I saw," says Procopius, whose account of the siege and fall of Ravenna I have followed so far, "when I saw the entrance of their army into Ravenna, I considered how actions are not concluded by valour, multitudes, or human virtue, but by some Divinity that steers the acts and judgements of men. The Goths had much the advantage in numbers and power, and since they came to Ravenna no defeat there had overthrown them, yet they became prisoners and thought it no shame to be slaves to fewer in number. The women (who had heard from their husbands that the enemy were tall and gallant men and not to be numbered) looked with contempt upon the Roman soldiers when they saw them in the city, and spat in the faces of their husbands, reviling them with cowardice, pointing at their conquerors."

Thus Ravenna, the impregnable city, was taken by stratagem and willingly; never again to pass out of Roman hands till Aistulf the Lombard in 752 seized it for a few years and thus caused Pepin to cross the Alps to vindicate the Roman name.

. . . . . .

The first Gothic war, against Vitiges, (536-540) had thus for its crown and end, the capture of Ravenna; the second, against Totila (541-553), proceeded from Ravenna for the reconquest, yet once again, of Italy.

In 540, after Ravenna had been occupied, Belisarius

recalled, and Vitiges taken as a captive to Constantinople, the Romans held all Italy except the city of Pavia. In 544, when Belisarius returned, they held only Ravenna, Rome, Spoleto, and a few other strongholds such as Perugia and Piacenza. Nor was this all. In this second war all Italy was laid waste and ruined, Rome was twice besieged and occupied by the Goths, and in 546, when Totila had done with her, during a space of forty days the City remained utterly desolate, without a single inhabitant. How had such a miserable and unexpected catastrophe befallen the Catholic cause?

In the first place it must be admitted that the capture of Ravenna by stratagem was not the final catastrophe it appeared for the Goths. It is true that that triumph seemed to give, and indeed did give, all Italy into the hands of the Romans, but that gift was never secured. Belisarius, partly from necessity, partly on account of the suspicious jealousy of the emperor, was withdrawn from Italy too soon. He was victorious, but he was not given time to secure his victories. The extraordinary incompetence and rivalries of the committee of generals which succeeded him let the opportunity for securing and establishing an enduring peace slip through its fingers; the inevitable reaction that followed the departure of Belisarius was not met at all, the whole situation that then developed was misunderstood, with the result that the Goths were soon able to find a leader, perhaps the most formidable, and certainly the most destructive, that they had ever produced.

The cause of the imperial incompetence and failure would appear to have been financial. The empire had been perhaps always, certainly for two hundred years, bankrupt. Its administration and above all its defence were beyond its means. The Gothic war had been a tremendous strain upon the imperial finances already incredibly involved in the defence of the East. It was necessary to find in Italy the money for that war and for the future defence of that country; but Italy had been ruined by the Gothic war and

above all things needed capital and a period of reproductive repose. These Justinian was unable to give her. His necessities forced him to cover the peninsula with tax gatherers, to bleed an already ruined country of the little that remained to her. If the result was a reaction, in the north actively Gothic, in the centre and south certainly indifferent to the imperial cause, we cannot wonder at it. The spiritual situation and the economic or material would not chime. The result was the appalling confusion we know as the second Gothic war.

I say it was a confusion. No clear issue seems to present itself from beginning to end; the old democratic cause, the Catholicism of the people rising in rage and fury against the Arianism of the courts, burnt low for a moment, and was indeed in part extinguished by the appalling misery of the material situation of Italy. Upon this materialism, the material benefits that Theodoric had undoubtedly conferred upon the Italian people, Totila, that formidable chieftain who now came to the front as the Gothic leader, based his appeal and his hope of victory. "Surely," he says to the Roman senate, "you must remember sometimes in these evil days the benefits which you received not so very long ago at the hands of Theodoric and Amalasuntha." And again: "What harm did the Goths ever do you? And tell me then what good you received from Justinian the emperor? . . . Has he not compelled you to give an account of every *solidus* which you received from the public funds even under the Gothic kings? All harassed and impoverished as you are by the war, has he not compelled you to pay to the Greeks the full taxes which could be levied in a time of profoundest peace?" Totila based his appeal upon the material well-being of the people. It was a formidable appeal; it nearly succeeded. That it did not succeed, though it had so much in its favour, is the best testimony we could have to the real nature of the war, which was not a struggle between two races or even primarily, at any rate, betweeen barbarism and

civilisation, but something greater and more fundamental, a fight to the death between two religions Arianism and Catholicism, upon the result of which the whole future of Europe depended.

The confusion of the second Gothic war, in which the future of the world and the major interests of man were in jeopardy, may be divided into three parts. The first of these is that in which the whole administration precariously established by Belisarius fell to pieces before the earthquake that was Totila, who, never systematically met and opposed, by the year 544 held all Italy with the exception, as I have said, of Ravenna, Rome, Spoleto, Perugia, Piacenza, and a few other strongholds. The second is that in which Belisarius again appears, and from the citadel of Ravenna, without ceasing or rest, but without much success, opposes him everywhere. In this period Rome was occupied and reoccupied no less than four times, and, as I have said, in 546 was left utterly desolate. Nevertheless, when for the second time Belisarius was recalled, in 548, he left things much as he had found them. He had at least—and with what scarcity of men and money we may see in his letters to the emperor—opposed and perhaps stemmed the overwhelming Gothic advance. At his departure the imperialists held Ravenna, Rome (but after the sack of 546), Rimini, Spoleto, Ancona, and Perugia. But before he arrived in Constantinople, Perugia had fallen; in the same year, 549, a mutiny in Rome gave the City to the Goths and Rimini was betrayed. In the year 551, the year of Narses' appointment as general-in-chief in Italy and the opening of the third period, only Ravenna and Ancona, with Hydruntum (Otranto) and Crotona in southern Italy, remained to the empire.

In that year, 551, however, everywhere the Gothic cause began to fail. In a sea-fight off Sinigaglia the imperial forces disposed of the Gothic sea power and relieved Ancona, which was in grave danger. About the same time Sicily was delivered from the Gothic yoke, and in the spring of 552

S. VITALE: THE GALLERY.

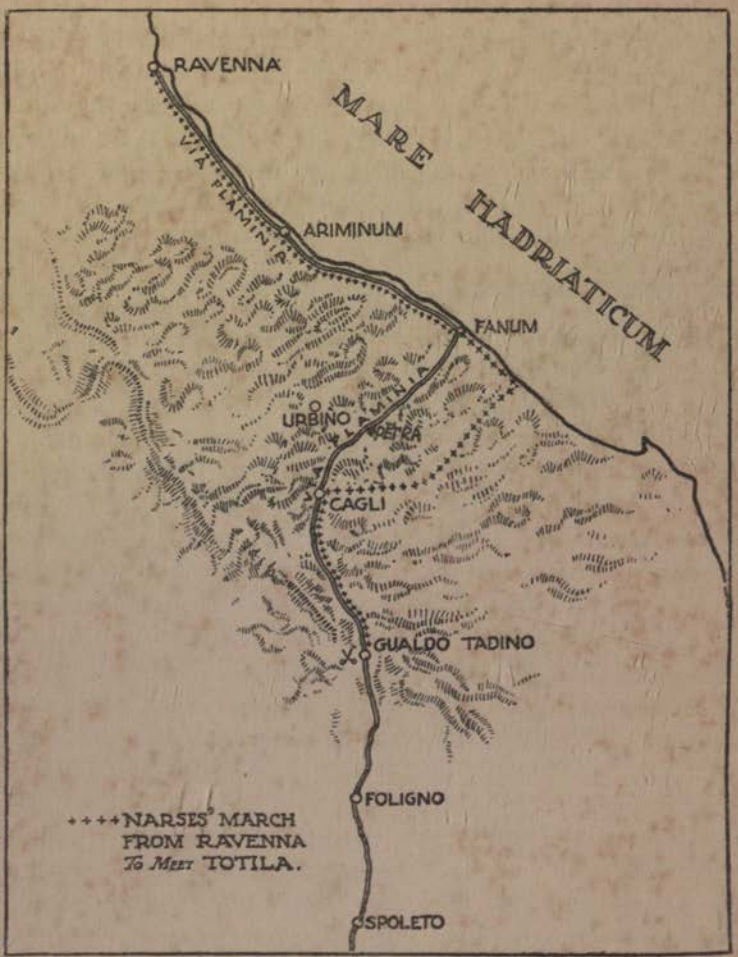
Crotona was relieved. Meanwhile, in Illyricum, Narses gathered his army, in which Ardoin, King of the Lombards, rode at the head of two thousand of his people, and prepared for the great march into Italy.

He came through Venetia round the head of the Adriatic, close to the sea (for a formidable Frankish host held the great roads), crossing with what anxiety we may guess, the mouths of the Piave, the Brenta, the Adige, and the Po by means of his ships, and having thus turned the flank of the Frankish armies he triumphantly marched into Ravenna. There he remained for nine days, as it were another Cæsar about to cross the Rubicon.

While he waited in Ravenna an insulting challenge reached him from the barbarian Usdrilas who held Rimini. "After your boasted preparations, which have kept all Italy in a ferment, and after striking terror into our hearts by knitting your brows and looking more awful than mortal men, you have crept into Ravenna and are skulking there afraid of the very name of the Goths. Come out with all that mongrel host of barbarians to whom you want to deliver Italy and let us behold you, for the eyes of the Goths hunger for the sight of you." [1] And Narses laughed at the insolence of the barbarian, and presently he set forward with the army he had made, upon the great road through Classis for Rimini, till he came to the bridge over the Marecchia, there which Augustus had built and which was held by the enemy. There in the fight which followed—little more than a skirmish—the barbarian Usdrilas came by his end, and Narses ignoring Rimini marched on, his great object before him, Totila and his army, which he meant, before all things else, to seek out and to destroy. So he went down the Flaminian Way to Fano and there presently left it for a by-way upon the left, rejoining the great highway some miles beyond the fortress of Petra Pertusa, which he disregarded as he had done that of Rimini. He marched on till he came to the very crest of

[1] Hodgkin's free translation of Procopius, *op. cit.* iv. 28.

the Apennines, over which he passed and camped upon the west under the great heights, at a place then called Ad Ensem and to-day Scheggia.



Meanwhile Totila had come to meet him from Rome, and had managed to reach Tadinum, the modern Gualdo Tadino, when he found Narses, unexpectedly, for he must have

thought the way over the mountains securely barred by the fortress of Petra Pertusa, upon the great road before him.

Narses sent an embassy to Totila to offer, "not peace, but pardon;" this the barbarian refused. Asked when he would fight Totila answered, "In eight days from this day." But Narses, knowing what manner of man his enemy was, made all ready for the morrow, and at once occupied the great hill upon his left which overlooked both camps. In this he was right, for no sooner had he seized this advantage than Totila attempted to do the same, but without any success.

Then on the morrow Totila, having meanwhile been reinforced with two thousand men, rode forth before the two armies and "exhibited in a narrow space the strength and agility of a warrior. His armour was enchased with gold; his purple banner floated with the wind; he cast his lance into the air; caught himself backwards; recovered his seat and managed a fiery steed in all the paces and evolutions of the equestrian school."[1] No doubt Narses the eunuch smiled. The barbarians were all the same, and they remain unaltered. Totila's theatrical antics are but the prototype to those amazing cavalry charges, excellently stage-managed, that may be seen almost any autumn during the German manœuvres, a new Totila at their head.

When Totila had finished his display the two armies faced one another, the imperialists with Narses and John upon the left, the Lombards in the centre, and Valerian upon the right with John the Glutton; the Goths in what order of battle we do not know. At length at noon the battle was joined. The Gothic charge failed, Narses drew his straight line of troops into a crescent, and the short battle ended in the utter rout of the Goths, Totila flying from the field. In that flight one Asbad a Gepid struck at him and fatally wounded him. He was borne by his companions to the village of Caprae, more than twelve miles away, and there he died.

Thus ended Totila the Goth and with him the Gothic cause

[1] Gibbon's free translation of Procopius, iv. 31.

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in Italy. A remnant of his army made its way to Pavia, where it was contained by Valerian; and all over Italy the Gothic fortresses hastened to surrender, Perugia, Spoleto, Narni, all opened their gates, and Narses marched on to occupy Rome which he did without much difficulty. All Italy lay open to the imperialists, and when Totila's successor Teias was slain all hope of recovery was gone. The Goths offered to leave Italy, and their offer was accepted. For a year longer a desultory war, the reduction of Cumæ and Lucca, occupied Narses; but by 554 this too was brought to an end, and unhappy Italy was once more gathered into the government of the empire.

VIII

MODICA QUIES

THE PRAGMATIC SANCTION AND THE SETTLEMENT OF ITALY

SUCH was the inevitable end of the Gothic war in Italy. The issue thus decided was, as I have tried to show, something much more tremendous than the mere supremacy of a race. Nothing less than the future of the world was assured upon those stricken fields and about those ruined fortresses, the supremacy of the Catholic religion in which was involved the whole destiny of Europe, the continuance of our civilisation and culture. For let it be said again: these wars of the sixth century were not a struggle to the death between two races, but between two religions; the opponents were not really Roman and Goth, but Catholic and Arian, and in the victory of the former was involved the major interest of mankind. The whole energy of that age was devoted to the final establishment of what for a thousand years was to be the universal religion of Europe, the source of all her greatness and the reason of her being. What was saved in those unhappy campaigns was not Italy, but the soul of Europe.

Certainly it was not Italy. Materially the result of those eighteen years of war, which began with the invasion of Italy by Belisarius in 536, reached their crisis in 540 with the capture of Ravenna, and were finally decided by Narses in 552-554, was the ruin of Italy. Exhausted, devastated, and untilled, the prey, for half a generation, of a fundamental war, Italy

was materially ruined by Justinian's Gothic campaigns, and so hopelessly that, when in 568 the Lombards fell upon her, she was almost unable to defend herself, to offer any resistance to what proved—and in part for this reason—the only barbaric invasion which had upon her any enduring consequences. Visigoths, Huns, Vandals, Ostrogoths, all poured over her, and presently, like winter floods, retreated and subsided, leaving nothing to remind us of their fear and devastation; the Lombards remained.

I say this was largely due to the appalling exhaustion and ruin of Italy in the Gothic war; but there was something else which we must not forget. The Gothic war was a religious war. The Arianism of the Goths had really threatened our civilisation. But the Lombards were largely mere heathens. Their heathenism was not at all dangerous to us as a heresy must always be.[1] Therefore Italy never roused herself from her exhaustion, one might almost say her indifference. It was only her material well-being that was at stake, her future was safe. Her great attempt against the Lombards was a spiritual effort, was an effort for their conversion, and their final discomfiture, wrought not from within the peninsula, but from over the Alps, did not involve their expulsion from Italy, but was seized upon as the opportunity for the re-establishment in name and in fact of the Western Empire, and for the great crowning of Charlemagne by the pope in S. Peter's church.

Italy, and with Italy Europe, were, then, saved from nothing less than death when Narses finally disposed of Totila in the Apennines in 552; but that war which had a result so very glorious had materially ruined the country.

From this general bankruptcy one city certainly escaped; that city was Ravenna, which since the year 540, when she had opened her gates to Belisarius, had been free from attack, and had more than ever been established as the capital of the

[1] It was not the paganism of the Italian Renaissance but the heresy of the Teutons which destroyed the unitv of Europe in the sixteenth century.

West. That position was secured to her, as I have already said, by her geographical position, which now that Constantinople had reasserted the claim of the empire to Italy established her more than at any time in her history as the necessary seat of military and administrative power; and from Ravenna as from the citadel the whole of the second part of the Gothic war was waged by the imperialists. As we might expect the true nature of that war is immediately manifested in her history at this time.

It would seem that very shortly after the occupation of Ravenna by the imperialists in 540, the re-edification of the city and its splendid embellishment was begun. The church of S. Vitalis begun by S. Ecclesius (*c.* 521-532) was finished and gloriously adorned with mosaics by S. Maximianus (*c.* 546-556), and not long after S. Apollonaris in Classe begun by S. Ursicinus (532-536) was completed and adorned by the same great bishop.

But this eagerness to mark and to express in such glorious monuments as these the great victory for Catholicism and civilisation that was then in the winning becomes even more manifest after the death of Totila and the end of the war. To the S. Agnellus and to the Church of Ravenna Justinian "*rectæ fidei Augustus*" gave all the substance of the Goths, according to the *Liber Pontificalis*,[1] "not only in Ravenna itself, but in the suburban towns and in the villages, both sanctuaries and altars, slaves and maidens, whatever was theirs. *S. Mater Ecclesia Ravennas, vera mater, vera orthodoxa nam ceteræ multæ Ecclesiæ falsam propter metum et terrores Principum superinduxere doctrinam; haec vero et veram et unicam Sanctam Catholicam tenuit Fidem, nunquam mutavit fluctuationem sustinuit, a tempestate quassata immobilis permansit.* Therefore S. Agnellus the archbishop reconciled all the churches of the Goths, which in their time or in that of King Theodoric had been built or had been

[1] Agnellus, *Liber Pontificalis* (ed. Holder-Egger, p. 334) *ad vitam Sancti Agnelli.*

occupied by the false doctrines of the Arians. . . . He thus reconciled the church of S. Eusebius which Unimundus the (Arian) bishop had built in the twenty-third year of King Theodoric. In the same year he reconciled the church of S. Georgius (S. Giorgio ad Tabulam fuori delle Mura) . . . the church of S. Sergius which is in Classis and of S. Zenone which is in Cæsarea." In Ravenna itself he reconciled the churches of S. Theodorus (S. Spirito), S. Maria in Cosmedin (the Arian Baptistery), the church of S. Martin (S. Apollinare Nuovo) which Theodoric had built, which was called *Cœlum Aureum* and which Agnellus re-decorated with the mosaics of the Martyrs and Virgins we see and the effigies of Justinian and himself.

Such was the work achieved in the fortunate capital. But ruined Italy awaited a more necessary, if less splendid, labour. This can have been nothing less than the resurrection of the country, which, in those eighteen years of war, can have become little less than a desert; and, as we might expect, all Italy desolate and depopulated looked to Justinian to succour her in her misery if she was not to perish under her ruins and her debts. The first step in that work was undertaken in the very year of the peace, in the August of the year 554, and it took the form of a solemn "Pragmatic Sanction" addressed to Narses and to Antiochus, the Prefect of Italy,[1] in Ravenna. It had for its object the social peace of Italy, the re-establishment of order out of the chaos of the Ostrogothic war; and it is significant of the true position of affairs that this decree asserts that it is issued by the emperor in reply to the petition of the pope.

It consists of twenty-seven articles, and first establishes what is to be considered as still having authority in that tempestuous past; what part of it is to remain and to be

[1] The fact that it was addressed to both surely seems to show that Narses at this time only held a military power in Italy. This is interesting as touching the discussion later on of the genesis of the exarchate.

confirmed and what is to be utterly swept away. Thus the emperor confirms all dispositions made by Amalasuntha, Athalaric, and Theodahad, as well as all his own acts—and these would include Theodoric's—and those of Theodora. But everything done by "the most wicked tyrant Totila" is null and void, "for we will not allow these law-abiding days of ours to take any account of what was done by him in the time of his tyranny."[1] Totila had indeed most cruelly attacked the great landed proprietors whom he suspected of too great an attachment for Constantinople; he had attacked them in their persons and in their wealth. With a single stroke of the pen Justinian, as it were, effaced all the ordinances of the tyrant and rendered again to their legitimate masters, as far as it could be done, their lands, their flocks, their peasants, and their slaves which had been taken from them, or which fear had caused them to alienate.

Such were the political achievements of the decree. Nor were its financial provisions less far-reaching. Something had to be done to meet the crisis resulting from the enormous quantity of debt. Everywhere Justinian undertook great public works, and tried to repair the destruction caused by the war; but it is probable that in reality he achieved very little. He had enriched the Church; he had re-established the great proprietors in their lands and their rights, but the industry and commerce of Italy, save perhaps at Ravenna and at Naples, he could not restore. And we seem to understand that the mere lack of men left whole districts of Italy uncultivated and desert.

As for the administrative and legal clauses of the decree, they gave the Italian—the Roman as he is called—the right to have his suit heard by a civil judge instead of a military official. This established the security of the Italian against the barbaric hosts the imperial armies had brought into the country. But perhaps more important, and certainly more significant, is the twelfth clause of the decree which relates

[1] Cf. Hodgkin, *op. cit.* vi. pp. 519-520.

to the way in which the *Judices Provinciarum* are to be appointed. "We order," says Justinian, "that only fit and proper persons able to administer the local government shall be chosen, and this by the bishops and chief persons of each province from the inhabitants of that province." This clause was soon proved to contain so much wisdom that in 569 by Justinian's successor it was extended to the provinces of the Eastern empire.

In all this we recognise the work of the great reformer who had already produced the *Corpus Juris Civilis*, consisting of the Institutes, Digest, Code, and Novellæ, which more than anything else he did—and he did everything—determined that Europe, which he had secured for ever, should be a Roman thing established upon Roman Law. But are we also to see in this great man the creator of the exarchate, that citadel of the empire in Italy which was to endure, though almost all else perished, till Charlemagne appeared and the empire itself suddenly re-arose, armed at all points and ready for battle? It might seem that we are not to attribute that great scheme to Justinian, but rather to a later recognition of the force and reality of the disasters that so few years after his death descended once more upon Italy.

When Narses at the head of the armies of Justinian had in 554 conquered the Goths and possessed Italy, the administrative divisions of the peninsula would seem to have remained almost the same as they had been in the time of Honorius. Indeed the re-entry of Italy within the empire was accompanied by no important change in the provincial divisions of the peninsular because there was no necessity for it. Narses, who ruled just eleven years in Ravenna, was never known by the title of exarch. On the contrary, Procopius and Agathias call him simply the general-in-chief of the Roman army ὁ Ρωμαίων στρατηγός, and pope Pelagius calls him *Patricius et Dux in Italia*, and others, among them Gregory the Great and Agnellus, simply *Patricius*. But it is obvious that there was something new in the official situation and that

certain extraordinary powers were conferred upon Narses. And it is the same with his successor Longinus. All the texts that mention him, including the *Liber Pontificalis*, call him *Præfectus*. But the transformation from which the exarchate arose was more obscure and far more slow than any official reform of Justinian's could have been. It is in part the result of the new condition of the country, which Justinian had had to take into account, but it is much more the result of the progress of the Lombard conquest and the new necessities of defence, which not one of the three great men who had restored Italy to the empire lived to see.

For Belisarius and Justinian both died in 565, and Narses, who was recalled in that year by the foolish and insolent Sophia, the wife of the new emperor Justin II., seems to have died about 572.

It is difficult to determine to which of these three great and heroic figures Italy, and through Italy, Europe, owes most, but since it was Justinian who chose and employed them we must, I think, accord him, here too, the first place in our remembrance.

Belisarius, who had fought the first great war so gloriously against Vitiges, and for so long and with so little encouragement had opposed Totila in the second, is of course one of the great soldiers of the world and perhaps the greatest the empire ever employed. His capture of Ravenna, by stratagem it is true, but against time and, as it were, in spite of the emperor, brought the first Gothic war to an end, and would, had he been left in Italy a few months longer, have prevented all the long drawn out agony of the second. As it was his achievement, and his achievement alone, made that second war something better than the hopeless affair it seemed for so long, and though he himself to all appearances made little headway against Totila, it was his series of heroic campaigns, in which he refused despair, that made the ever glorious march of Narses possible, and the final crushing of the barbarian in the Apennines after all but the crown of his endeavour.

Of his master, the great emperor, it is not for me to speak since to this day his works speak for him. The thirty-eight years of his reign are the most brilliant period of the later Roman empire, and if the military triumphs he conceived were the work of Belisarius and Narses we must attribute to him alone the magnificent conception, the tireless energy, and the heroic purpose which established the great pillars of the *Corpus Juris Civilis* which is the legal foundation of mediæval and of modern Europe, the basis of all Canon Law and of all Civil Law in every civilised country. Of his great ecclesiastical polity perhaps we must speak with less enthusiasm, though not with less wonder; while his glorious buildings remain only less enduring than his codification of the laws. If in Ravenna we are most nearly and splendidly reminded of him in S. Vitale, we do not forget that he was the creator of perhaps the greatest ecclesiastical building left to us, the mighty church—lost to us now for near five hundred years—of S. Sophia in Constantinople. On the whole we see in Justinian the greatest of all the emperors save Augustus, and perhaps Constantine. Nor can any later state show us so great a ruler.

Justinian in his Italian designs had been very well served by Belisarius, nor were his ideas less splendidly carried out by Narses. Indeed, in many ways the eunuch was the better instrument and especially in administration. He ruled in peace in Ravenna as I have said for eleven years, devoting himself to the resurrection of unhappy Italy. In this we may think he was as successful as the shortness of the time of his rule would allow. The catastrophe that put an end alike to his work and to the regeneration of Italy was the death of Justinian. In that very year, 565, the great eunuch was deposed, an insulting recall reached him from the empress Sophia, and he retired to Rome, where he passed the few years that remained to him in retirement, and died there, it is thought, in 572.

A curious and certainly an unproved accusation hangs

over his name. It seems that his government of Italy was not wholly grateful to the Italians, who it must be remembered were ruined and whom many years of eager self-denial would hardly render solvent again. Now the business of Narses was to achieve this solvency and to pay out of Italy some sort of interest upon the enormous sums Justinian had disbursed for the great war. If he incurred the hatred of the Italians it would not be surprising, nor would it lead us to accuse him of tyranny. "Where Narses the eunuch rules," they said, "he makes us slaves." This cry came to the ears of the emperor for whom it was meant. No doubt, being a fool, he was anxious to be rid of Justinian's pro-consul. However that may be, Narses was recalled, the empress, it is said, sending him a message to the effect that as he was a eunuch she would appoint him to apportion the spinning to the women of her household. To this Narses is reported to have replied, doubtless with much the same smile as that with which he had greeted the equestrian display of Totila, that he would spin her a thread of which neither she nor the emperor Justin would be able to find the end. In the course of time this mysterious threat, which was probably never uttered, was said to refer to the enormous catastrophe which within three years of Narses' recall fell upon Italy—the Lombard invasion. And Narses, who had employed the Lombards in the last campaign against Totila, was said to have revenged himself by inviting them into Italy to possess it.

The accusation rests upon no good authority, and is altogether unlikely when we remember how great a part of his life had been devoted to the incorportion of Italy within the empire. But there is this much truth in it we may perhaps think; that had the great eunuch been left in command, Alboin would not have dared to come on, and if he had dared, would have found an army and an Italy ready to fling him back into his darkness.

IX

THE CITADEL OF THE EMPIRE IN ITALY

THE LOMBARD INVASION

It was upon the second day of April 568, upon the Monday within the octave of Easter, that Alboin set out to cross the Julian Alps, to descend upon an Italy which even the great Narses had not been able, in the short sixteen years of peace he had secured her, to recover from the utter exhaustion of a generation of war. No army awaited him, no attempt was made to crush his rude and barbarous army in the marches, he was unopposed, save that the bishop of Treviso begged him to spare the property of his church, and presently the whole province of Venetia, with the exception of Padua, Mantua, and Monselice, was in his hands. Those who could, doubtless fled away, for the most part to that new settlement in the Venetian lagoons which was presently to give birth to Venice and which had been founded by those who had fled from Attila; but there were many who could not flee. These came under the cruel yoke of the invader. Perhaps Alboin spent the winter in Verona, perhaps in Friuli; wherever it was, he but prepared his advance and still no one appeared to say him nay. By the end of 569 all Cisalpine Gaul with Liguria and Milan, except Pavia, the coast, Cremona, Piacenza, and a few smaller places, were in his hands. Indeed, in all that terrible flood of disasters we hear of but one great city which offered even for a time a successful resistance. This was

Pavia, naturally so strongly defended by the Po and the Ticino. Alboin established an army about it, and swore to massacre all its inhabitants since it alone had dared to resist him. Pavia fell to the Lombard, after a three years' siege, in 572; but Alboin was prevented from carrying out his vow, and not long after Pavia became the capital of the Lombard power in Italy.

Meantime, those three years, during which Pavia held her own, had not been wasted by the barbarian. He crossed the Apennines, we may believe as Totila had done, by the old deserted way to Fiesole, brought all Tuscany under his yoke and a great part both of central and of southern Italy, establishing there two "duchies" as the centres of his power at Spoleto and Benevento. Then he returned to take Pavia, all this time besieged, and in the same year, 572, it is probable that Piacenza fell also, and Mantua. All Italy was in confusion, the system of government re-established by Narses broken; the work of Justinian's reconquest seemed all undone. That it was not wholly undone, that it lived on and was at last re-established, we owe to two great facts: the conversion of the Lombards to Catholicism by Gregory the Great and the establishment of the exarchate, the entrenchment of Roman power and civilisation in Ravenna. Let us consider these things.

The Lombards were barbarians and therefore pagans or Arians, but their Arianism was of a different kind from that of the Huns, different even from that of the Ostrogoths. Indeed, though the Lombards may be called Arian, for indeed such Christianity as they possessed was wholly Arian, they were but little removed from mere heathenism. It is true that they sacked churches, slaughtered priests, and carried off the holy vessels everywhere as they came into Italy; but they did this, it would seem, not from a sectarian hatred of the Catholic Faith, but from mere heathenism. As pagans, heathen or semi-heathen, they might be converted, and thus their advent was ultimately less dangerous to our civilisation

than the conquest of the Ostrogoths threatened to be. I do not mean to suggest that that advent was without danger. It was of course full of dreadful peril, but that peril was chiefly material and not spiritual; it could destroy, but not create; moreover, since in the main it was pagan, it could only destroy material things.

It is unthinkable that the Italy of the sixth century was for a moment in danger of losing its Faith, of being de-christianised. That, all things considered, in the third fourth and fifth centuries there had more than once been a real danger of the victory of some heresy, and especially of that subtle Arianism, the forerunner of Mahometanism, which all the invaders professed, and most of them so bitterly, we know; as we know that with the hard won victory of the Catholic Faith the whole of the future was safe; but that in the Italy of the sixth century the Faith was in danger from a horde of semi-pagan barbarians is not to be thought of. To this extent, and it is three parts at least of the whole, the Lombard invasion was less perilous than those which had come and passed away before it. Once more, the Catholic church was to be victorious, but in a different fashion. It cast out the Visigoths, the Huns, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths from Italy, for it could not convert them; the Lombards it converted and they remained. It converted them because they were rather heathen than Arian, and the victory was won by that great Gregory who, seeing our forefathers in the Forum of Rome, and loving them for their bright hair and open faces—*non Angli sed Angeli si Christiani*—sent S. Austin to turn them too from their pagan rites and gather them into the fold of Christ.

But there was something else beside the fact that the Lombards were pagan, and therefore to be converted, which was a part of the salvation of Italy.

It is possible that the Lombards might have been as Catholic as the Franks and yet, barbarians as they were, have destroyed civilisation in Italy, have broken the continuity

of Europe, have obliterated all our traditions, and altogether undone the great work of Justinian. It is possible, but it is highly improbable; that it was impossible we owe to Ravenna.

Ravenna was impregnable and her seaward gate was always open. During all the years of the Lombard domination she was the citadel of the empire in Italy, the seat of the prefect and the exarch, the imperial representatives.

It must be grasped that even after the fall of Ticinum in 572, as the Byzantine historian tells us, perhaps no one, and certainly no one in Ravenna, regarded the invasion as anything but a passing evil like all the other barbarian incursions. No one believed Italy to be irrevocably lost; on the contrary, everyone was assured that the lost provinces could soon be delivered again.

This may explain, though perhaps it cannot excuse, the passive attitude of Longinus, the successor of Narses, who in Ravenna represented the emperor in Italy, perhaps till the year 584. We know nothing of any attempts he may have made to stem the barbarian flood, and indeed the only incident in his career with which we are acquainted is romantic rather than military or political. For when Rosamond, the queen of the Lombards, murdered her husband Alboin in his palace at Verona, because he had forced her to pledge him in a goblet fashioned from the skull of her father, she fled away with her stepdaughter Albswinda, the great Lombard spoil, and her two accomplices, Helmichis her lover and Peredeus the chamberlain, and came to seek shelter in Ravenna. It seems she had written to Longinus and he, perhaps, hoping for some political advantage, and certainly full of the tales of her beauty, sent a ship up the Po to bring her to him with her two companions. When he saw her he found that rumour had not lied, and longing for her, suggested that she should kill Helmichis and marry himself. Whether from fear or ambition she did this thing, and slew her lover with a cup of poison as he came from the bath. But he, even as he drank understanding all, suddenly forced the same cup upon her,

and standing over her with a naked sword forced her to drink; so that they both lay dead upon the pavement.

Albswinda and the Lombard treasure, the spoil of the cities of Italy, were sent with Peredeus to Constantinople. And it may be that it was in them Longinus hoped to find his political advantage; in this, however, he was deceived. It is true that a pause in the Lombard advance followed the death of Alboin, and that Cleph, his successor, was soon murdered. But the pause in the advance, though, through it all, Rome was blockaded, was due to the fact that Authari, the heir to the Lombard throne, was but a boy. Nevertheless, this interval was used by Constantinople to despatch Baduarius, the son-in-law of the emperor Justin, to Italy with an army, but without success; and in 578, the year in which Justin died, the Lombards were bought off from Rome with imperial gold, only to turn upon the very citadel of the empire in Italy, Ravenna itself. In the year 579 Faroald, duke of Spoleto, fell upon Classis, and took it and spoiled it.

This, however, was but an isolated effort, and though the Lombards held Classis, they achieved little else in Italy till after Authari was chosen king in 584.

In the following year Smaragdus, as we may think, was appointed to succeed Longinus and apparently with new powers, and three years later, in the very year that the heroic Insula Comacina was taken by the Lombards, Classis was recovered for the empire.

The Lombards had then been ravaging Italy for twenty years, an extraordinary change had come over the provinces that Justinian had so hardly recovered, and this change is at once visible in the imperial administration in Italy. The exarchate appears.

It has been maintained by many historians that the great reform of which the establishment of the exarch and the exarchate is the result was the work of that very great reformer Justinian. It was worthy of him; but the Italy he knew and saved was not in need of any change in her

administrative divisions which, as I have said, remained under Narses almost the same as they had been in the last days of the Western empire.[1]

The transformation out of which the exarchate arose was slow and obscure, not the work of a great creative mind, but of necessity. It was the result of many causes which it is not difficult to name; they were the progress of the Lombard conquest, the condition imposed upon the unconquered parts of Italy by that conquest, and especially the new necessity for defence imposed on the imperial power.

It is obvious that the result of the first ten years of that conquest was a complete destruction of the limits of the old Roman provinces of Italy. A new grouping of territories was not only necessary but was already forming itself under the pressure of the conquest and its terror. The regions which had escaped the barbarians were drawing together without any regard for the ancient provincial divisions and were grouping themselves about the cities, where the resistance, such as it was, was concentrating itself, and where the imperial administration had taken refuge.

If we confine ourselves for the moment to Italy north of the Apennines, we shall find that in the old province of Liguria the vicar of the prefect of the prætorium had fled from Milan to Genoa, and that about that city the débris of the old province was slowly re-assembling itself. In Venetia we shall find that the governor had departed to Grado, and about this town as a centre the eastern part of the old province was gathered. The western part of that province, cut off from its capital, attached itself by force of circumstances to what remained of Æmilia and of Flaminia, whose neighbour she was, and these fragments of the ancient provinces all together grouped themselves about, or found their centre in, Ravenna, the capital of Flaminia and the residence of the prefect of Italy.

[1] For what follows cf. Diehl, *Etudes sur l'administration Byzantine dans l'Exarchat de Ravenne* (1888).

In these new groupings the great pre-occupation and the supreme interest are defence—the defence of civilisation against the barbarian.

Now, it was to regulate this new state of affairs that the exarchate was created; or rather the exarchate was the official acknowledgment of a state of affairs that the disastrous invasion of the Lombards had brought about. The new order was established at the end of the reign of Justin II. (565-578) under a new and supreme official. Without doing away with the prefect of Italy the emperor placed over him as supreme head of the new administration the exarch [1] who was both the military commander-in-chief and the governor-general of Italy; and, since the chief need of Italy was defence, without entirely suppressing the civil administration, he placed at the head of each of the re-organised provinces a certain military officer—the duke.

The earliest document that remains to us in which we find definite mention of the exarch is the famous letter, dated October 4, 584, of pope Pelagius II. to the deacon Gregory, his nuncio in Constantinople. It is probable that the exarch at this time was Smaragdus, but it is extremely improbable that he was the first to bear the new title. This it would seem was a much nobler and more notable person.

It will be remembered that in the year 575 Baduarius, the son-in-law of the emperor, had appeared in Italy at the head of an army, had been beaten by the Lombards, and a little later had died, probably in 575.[2] This man was not only a great Byzantine official, but the destined successor of Justin and one of the first personages of the empire. It is obvious, if at such a moment he commanded the imperial armies in Italy, he was supreme governor of the province. And it

[1] For the discussion of the derivation of the title "Exarch," *see* Diehl, *op. cit.* pp. 15-16.

[2] Migne, lxxii. 865; Joannes Biclarensis, *s.a.* 575; cf. Hodgkin, *op. cit.* v. p. 195, and Diehl, *u.s.*

seems certain that it was to mark the amalgamation in him of the two offices, military and civil, that the new title of exarch was created.[1]

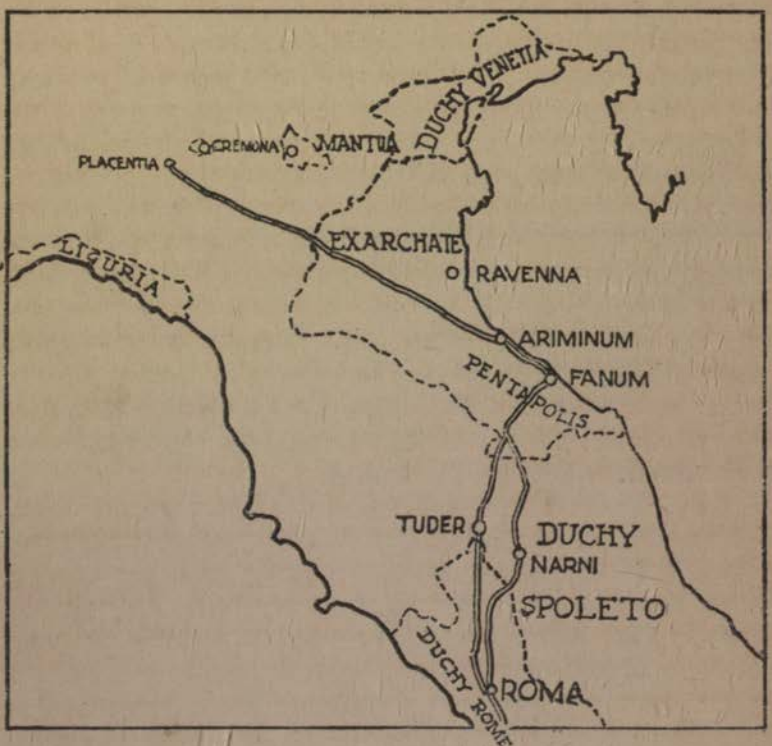
At the same time as the central government took on a new form the provincial administration was re-organised. Before the year 590, this had been certainly achieved. Istria, as we have seen, was divided from Venetia and formed a new and a special government. In Flaminia Rimini, which till now had been a part of the same province as Ravenna, was detached and became the capital of a new government in which a part of the Picenum, Ancona, and Osimo were involved. While the exarchate properly so called, that is the region of Ravenna from which Rimini and Picenum were now separate, formed a new province under the direct authority of the governors-general of Italy, that is to say, of the exarch of Ravenna. By the year 590, then, we see Italy thus divided into seven districts or governments: (1) the Duchy of Istria, (2) the Duchy of Venetia, (3) the Exarchate to which Calabria is attached, (4) the Duchy of Pentapolis, (5) the Duchy of Rome, (6) the Duchy of Naples, (7) Liguria.

Geographically the exarchate of Ravenna was bounded on the north by the Adige, the Tartaro, and the principal branch of the Po as far as its confluence with the Panaro. Hadria and Gabellum were its most northern towns in the hands of the imperialists. The western frontier is more difficult to determine with exactitude; it may be said to have run between Modena and Bologna. On the south the Marecchia divided the exarchate from the duchy of Pentapolis whose capital was Rimini. The Pentapolis consisted of Rimini, Pesaro, Fano, Sinigaglia, and Ancona upon the sea and of the five inland cities of Urbino, Fossombrone, Jesi, Cagli, and Gubbio; while the great towns of

[1] "It is only an hypothesis," says M. Charles Diehl, the originator of this theory, "but it explains how, between the prefect Longinus (569-572) and the exarch Smaragdus (584) was produced in the years 572-576 the administrative transformation out of which rose the exarchate."

the exarchate were set along the Via Æmilia and were Bologna, Imola (Forum Cornelii), Faenza, Forlì, Forlimpopoli, and Cesena.

Such then, before the year 590, was the new imperial administration in the Italy formed by the Lombard invasion.



In the year after the recapture of Classis from the Lombards, that is to say, in 589, the exarch Smaragdus was recalled. He had apparently become insane and had been guilty of extraordinary violence towards the patriarch of Aquileia and three other bishops whom he dragged to Ravenna. His successor was Romanus who held office till 597. In the same year, 589, Authari was married at Pavia to Theodelinda, who

was to be so potent an instrument in the conversion of the Lombards and therefore in the salvation of Italy. And in the following year, 590, pope Pelagius II. died, and Gregory the Great was chosen to succeed him.

With the advent of the new exarch a brighter prospect seemed for a moment to open for Italy. In the first year of Romanus's appointment the imperialists regained the greater part of the cities of the plain; they re-occupied Modena, Reggio, Parma, Piacenza, Altinum, and Mantua. But the strength of the Latin position in Italy lay, and continued to lie, in the two great imperial cities, Ravenna and Rome. Little by little this position had crystallised and now a new state appeared, a state which in one way or another was to endure till our day and which our fathers knew as the States of the Church. With the two cities of Ravenna and Rome as *nuclei*, this state formed itself in the very heart of Italy along the Via Flaminia which connected them. It cut, and effectually, the Lombard kingdom in two, and isolated the duchies of Spoleto and Benevento from the real Lombard power in Cisalpine Gaul, with its great capital at Pavia; and indestructible as it was, it absolutely insured the final success of the Catholic Faith, the Latin nationality, and the imperial power, the three necessities for the resurrection of Europe

This achievement was in the first place due to three great personalities: to Justinian who had succeeded in establishing the imperial power with its capital at Ravenna, and whose work had such life in it that, in spite of every adverse circumstance, it was able to develop and to maintain itself during more than two hundred years and uphold the imperial idea in Italy until the pope was able to re-establish the empire in the West as a self-supporting state; to Gregory the Great in whom we see personified the hope and strength of the papacy and the Latin idea which it was to uphold and to glorify; and to Theodelinda, that passionately Catholic Lombard queen, who was able to lead her Lombards into the fold of the Roman church, and who in her son Adalwald by

her second husband Agilulf, whom she had raised to the throne, presented the Lombard kingdom with its first Catholic king, and had thus done her part to secure the future.

Of these three powers those of Ravenna and Rome were, of course, by far the more important; for indeed the conversion of the Lombards was, rightly understood, but a part of the work of Gregory. Yet though both were working for the same end they did not always propose to march by the same road. In 592, for instance, the pope, seeing Naples the capital of the little isolated duchy upon his southern flank very hard pressed, proposed at all costs to relieve it; but the exarch Romanus, perhaps seeing further, was not to be moved to the assistance of the peasants of Campania from the all-important business of the defence of central Italy and the Flaminian Way, the line of communication between Ravenna and Rome. He proposed to let Naples look after itself and at all costs to hold Perugia. Gregory, however, who claimed in an indignant letter of this date (592) to be "far superior in place and dignity" to the exarch, proceeded to save Naples by making a sort of peace with the Lombard duchy of Spoleto. It is possible that this peace saw the Lombard established in Perugia, which was the Roman key, till now always in Roman hands, of the great line of communication between Rome and Ravenna. However that may be, Gregory's peace not only aroused great anger in Constantinople, but brought Romanus quickly south with an army to re-occupy Perugia, Orte, Todi, Ameria, and various other cities of Umbria. But Romanus had been right. His movement southward alarmed Agilulf, who immediately left Pavia, and crossing the Apennines, we may suppose,[1] as

[1] All that Paulus Diaconus, *Hist. Lang.* lib. iv. cap. 8, says is: "Hac etiam tempestate Romanus Patricius et Exarchus Ravennæ Romam properavit. Qui dum Ravennam revertitur retenuit civitates, quæ a Langobardis tenebantur, quarum ista sunt nomina: Sutrium, Polimartium Hortas, Tuder, Ameria, Perusia, Luceolis et alias quasdam civitates. Quod factum cum regi Agilulfo nunciatum esset statim Ticino egressus cum valido exercitu civitatem Perusium petiit . . ."

Totila had done, threatened Rome itself. Then, however, he had to face something more formidable than an imperial army. Upon the steps of S. Peter's church stood the Vicegerent of God, great S. Gregory, who alone turned him back and saved the city.

The truth of all this would appear to be that Gregory was really working for peace. The Lombards were in a fair way to becoming Catholic, and as such they were no longer really dangerous to Italy. The real danger was, as the pope saw, the prolongation of a useless war. Two years later, in 595, we find Gregory writing to the "assessor" of the exarch enjoining peace. "Know then that Agilulf, king of the Lombards, is not unwilling to make a general peace, if my lord the patrician is of the same mood. . . . How necessary such a peace is to all of us you know well. Act therefore with your usual wisdom, that the most excellent exarch may be induced to come in to this proposal without delay, and may not prove himself to be the one obstacle to a peace so expedient for the state. If he will not consent, Agilulf again promises to make a separate peace with us; but we know that in that case several islands and other places will necessarily be lost. Let the exarch then consider these points, and hasten to make peace, that we may at least have a little interval in which we may enjoy a moderate amount of rest, and with the Lord's help may recruit the strength of the republic for future resistance." [1]

It is obvious from this letter that the pope and the emperor no longer understood one another, and it is not surprising that the one thought the other a fool and told him so. Doubtless the emperor recalled the long and finally successful war against the Ostrogoths, in which Belisarius had always refused, not only terms of peace other than unconditional surrender, but even to treat. That policy had been, at least from the point of view of Constantinople, successful. From the point of view of the papacy and of Italy, it had had a more doubtful

[1] Gregory, *Ep.* v. 36 (34), trs. Hodgkin, *op. cit.* v. p. 382.

result, but the fact that the Ostrogoths were Arians had satisfied perhaps both, and certainly the papacy, that a truce could not be thought of.

From the imperial point of view things remained much the same in the Lombard war as they had been in the war with the Ostrogoths. From the papal and Italian point of view they were very different. To begin with, the Lombards were fast accepting the Catholic Faith, and then if Italy had suffered in the Ostrogothic wars, which were everywhere eagerly contested by Constantinople, what was she suffering now when the greater part of the country was open to a continual and an almost unopposed attack? "You think me a fool," the pope wrote to the emperor. In Ravenna the papal envoy was lampooned and laughed at. Then in the end of 596 the exarch Romanus died.

Romanus was succeeded by Callinicus (Gallicinus) in whom the pope found a more congenial and perhaps a more reasonable spirit. By 598 an armistice had been officially concluded between the imperialists and the Lombards, and at length in 599, after some foolish delays in which it would appear that the pope was not without blame, a peace was concluded. Gregory, however, for all his reluctance at the last, had won his way. Henceforth it would be impossible to regard the Lombards as mere invaders after the pattern of their predecessors, Visigoths, Vandals, Huns, and Ostrogoths. They were, or would shortly be, a Catholic people; they held a very great part of Italy; they had entered into a treaty with the emperor not as *fœderati* but as equals and conquerors. Gregory the Great had permanently established the barbarians in Italy, and in his act, the act be it remembered of the apostle of the English, of the apostle of the Lombards, we seem to see the shadowy power that had been Leo's by the Mincio suddenly appear, a new glory in the world. The new power in the West, the papacy, which thus shines forth really for the first time in the acts of Gregory, unlike the empire, whether Roman or Byzantine, will know no frontiers, but will

go into all the world and compel men to come in as its divine commission ordained.

In Italy from the time of the peace with the Lombards (599) onwards what we see is the decline of the imperial power of Constantinople and the rise of the papacy. And this was brought about not only by the circumstances in which Italy and the West found themselves, but also by the character of the imperial government.

When Justin II. disappeared in 578, and made way for Tiberius II., he was already a madman, and though Tiberius was renowned for his virtues, he reigned but four years, and in 582 Maurice the Cappadocian sat upon the throne of Justinian and ruled for twenty years not unwisely, but, so far as Italy was concerned, without success. It was he who was at last brought to make peace with the Lombards and thus for the first time to acknowledge a barbarian state independent of the empire in Italy. He and his children were all murdered in 602 by Phocas, a centurion, whose shame and crimes and cruelties doubtless did much to weaken the moral power of the empire face to face with the papacy.

The peace of 599, the usurpation of Phocas in 602, and the death of Gregory the Great in 604, close a great period and stamp the seventh century in its very beginning with a new character.

That character is in a sense almost wholly disastrous. Those vague and gloomy years, of which we know so little, are almost unrelieved in their hopeless confusion. It is true that Italy had found a champion in the papacy which would one day restore the empire in the West, as Justinian himself had not been able to do; it is true that already Arianism was defeated if not stamped out. But it is in the seventh century that Mahometanism, the greater successor of the Arian heresy, first appears; and it is in the seventh century that it first becomes certain that East and West are philosophically and politically different and irreconcilable. The whole period

is full of disasters, and is as we may think the darkest hour before the dawn.

As I have said, the history of those disastrous years is everywhere in the West vague and confused, and this is not least so in Italy and Ravenna.

Ravenna as always remains the citadel of the imperialists in Italy and the West, and as such we must regard her, passing in review as well as we may those miserable years in which she played so great and so difficult a part.

When the Emperor Maurice was assassinated with his family in the year 602, Callinicus was, as we have seen, exarch in Ravenna, but with the usurpation of Phocas that Smaragdus who had already been exarch and had been recalled, perhaps for his too great violence, in 589, was again appointed. He seems to have ruled from 602 to 611. In the last year of the government of Callinicus an attempt had been made by the exarch to force the Lombards to renew the two years' peace established in 599, and on better terms, by the seizure of a daughter of Agilulf's, then in Parma, with her husband. They were carried off to Ravenna. But the imperialists got nothing by their treachery. Agilulf at once moved against Padua and took it and rased it to the ground. In the following year Monselice also fell to his arms, and though after the murder of the emperor Maurice in 602 the exarch Callinicus, the author of the abduction, fell, and Smaragdus was appointed by Phocas, the hostages were not returned, and in July 603, Agilulf, after a campaign of less than three months, had possessed himself of Cremona, Mantua, and Vulturina, and probably of most of those places which the imperialists had re-occupied in Cisalpine Gaul in 590. Smaragdus was forced to make peace and to give up his hostages. The peace he made, which left Agilulf in possession of all the cities he had taken, was to endure for eighteen months, but it seems to have been renewed from year to year, and when in 610 Phocas was assassinated and with the accession of Heraclius (610-641) Smaragdus was again recalled and

Joannes appointed to Ravenna, the same policy seems to have been followed.

Joannes Lemigius Thrax, as Rubeus, the sixteenth-century historian of Ravenna, calls him, ruled in Ravenna from 611 to 615, and in the latter year was assassinated there apparently in the midst of a popular rising, though what this really was we do not know. His successor, the eunuch Eleutherius (616-620), seems to have found the now fragmentary imperial state in Italy in utter confusion, and indeed on the verge of dissolution. Naples had been usurped by a certain Joannes of Compsa, perhaps "a wealthy Samnite landowner," who proclaimed himself lord there, and it is obvious that even in Ravenna there was grave discontent. Eleutherius soon disposed of the usurper of Naples, but only to find himself faced by a renewal of the Lombard war, which he seems to have prevented by consenting to pay the yearly tribute which perhaps Gregory the Great had promised when he made a separate peace with the Lombard in 593, when Rome was practically in the hands of the barbarian. It was obvious that the imperial cause was failing. That the exarch thought so is obvious from the fact that in 619 he actually assumed the diadem and proclaimed himself emperor in Ravenna, and set out with an army along the Flaminian Way for Rome to get himself crowned by the pope Boniface V. But the eunuch was before his time; moreover, he was a defeated and not a victorious general. At Luceoli upon the Flaminian Way, not far from Gualdo Tadino where Narses had broken Totila, in that glorious place his own soldiers slew him and sent his head to Heraclius.

Of his immediate successor we know nothing—not even his name,[1] but in or about 625 Isaac the Armenian was appointed

[1] Mr. Hodgkin (*op. cit.* vi. 157) suggests that the predecessor of Isaac was that Eusebius who, as ambassador for Constantinople, persuaded, or is said to have persuaded, Adalwald, King of the Lombards since the death of his father, Agilulf (615), to slay all his chief men and nobles, and to hand over the Lombard kingdom to the empire; but was poisoned, it is suggested, by Isaac in Ravenna, whither he had fled when he had killed twelve among them. Ariwald succeeded him (625).

and he ruled, as his epitaph tells us, for eighteen years (625-644). Isaac's rule was not fortunate for the imperialists. He is probably to be acquitted of the murder of Taso, Lombard duke of Tuscia, but it is certain that Rothari, the Lombard king in his time, "took all the cities of the Romans which are situated on the sea-coast from Luna in Tuscany to the

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boundary of the Franks; also he took and destroyed Opitergium, a city between Treviso and Friuli, and with the Romans of Ravenna he fought at the river of Æmilia which is called Scultenna (Panaro). In this fight 8000 fell on the Roman side, the rest fleeing away." [1]

Nor was this all. It is in Isaac's time that the growing jealousy of the empire in regard to the papacy for the first time breaks into flame. Isaac, who as exarch had the right

[1] Paulus Diaconus; cf. Hodgkin, vi. 168.

to "approve" the election of the pope, on the accession of Severinus (638) sent Maurice his *chartularius* to Rome as his ambassador. This Maurice it seems was eager against the papal power, and finding an opportunity in Rome suddenly seized the Lateran and its wealth at the head of "the Roman army," and wrote to Isaac that he might come and enjoy the spoil. The exarch presently arrived in Rome, resided in the Lateran during eight days, banished the cardinals, and proceeded to steal everything he could lay his hands on in the name of the emperor, to whom he sent a part of the booty. A little later Maurice attempted to repeat his rape, but doubtless hoping to enrich himself he began by repudiating Isaac, who then dealt with him, had him brought northward, and beheaded at a place called Ficulæ, twelve miles from Ravenna; but before he could decide what punishment to mete out to Maurice's accomplices the exarch himself died, "smitten," as it was said, "by God," and the exarchate was filled apparently by Theodore Calliopas (644-646).

Theodore Calliopas was twice exarch. Of his first administration we know nothing at all; but in 646 he was succeeded by Plato (646-649), whose name we learn from a letter of the emperor Constans II. to his successor Olympius (649-652), who had been imperial chamberlain in Constantinople. Theodore Calliopas was then again appointed and ruled in Ravenna for eleven years (653-664).

We have seen the empire and the papacy politically at enmity and certainly bent on attaining different political ends in Italy and the West, and this is emphasised by the economic condition of Italy which the empire taxed heavily. Philosophically Constantinople had never perhaps been very eagerly Catholic—or must one say papal? But now at this dangerous moment a doctrine definitely heretical was to be officially adopted there and supported by emperor and patriarch with insistance and perhaps enthusiasm. Heraclius, the grandfather of Constans II., had asserted the Monothelete heresy which maintained that although Christ

had two distinct natures yet He had but one *Will*—his human will being merged in the divine. The patriarch of Constantinople, always jealous of the popes, eagerly upheld this doctrine which the papacy continually and consistently denounced. Now Constans II. cared for none of these things. He refused to allow that either pope or patriarch was right, but as though he had been living in the sixteenth instead of the seventh century gravely announced that "the sacred Scriptures, the works of the Fathers, the Decrees of the five General Councils are enough for us;" and asked: "Why should men seek to go beyond these?" Roundly he refused to allow the question to be either supported or attacked.

Now the whole of the West was very heartily with the pope in sentiment; but save for the bishops of Italy he stood alone against the great patriarchates of the East. Nevertheless, he refused to be silent and to obey the emperor. Therefore Olympius, Constans' chamberlain in 649, came to Italy as exarch with orders to arrest the pope and bring him to Constantinople: this it seemed to him a prudent thing to do; he was to judge for himself. Olympius decided it was not a prudent thing to do. He found the Italian bishops and the people eagerly Catholic. There is a story that he attempted instead to take the pope's life as he said Mass, but this is probably untrue, for we find pope and exarch presently excellent friends. He went on into Sicily to meet the first invasion of the Saracens in that island, and died there of the pestilence.

Theodore Calliopas was appointed exarch for the second time as his successor in 652. He had either less sagacity or less scruple than his predecessor, for in the following year he appeared with an army in Rome. He found the pope ill and in bed before the high altar of S. John Lateran. He surrounded the church and entered it with his men, who were guilty of violence and desecration. But the pope, to save bloodshed, surrendered himself to the exarch, shouting as he emerged from the church, "Anathema to all who say that

Martin has changed a jot or tittle of the Faith. Anathema to all who do not remain in his orthodox Faith even to the death." Through the tumultuous and weeping city the pope passed to the palace of the exarch upon the Palatine Hill. He entered it a prisoner and was presently smuggled away on board ship to Constantinople, where he was examined and condemned to death, insulted in the Hippodrome, and his sentence commuted to imprisonment and exile to Cherson, where he died in 655.

The controversy slumbered. Before long, surely to the amazement of the West, the emperor landed in Italy at Tarentum with the object of finally dealing with the Lombards, for Rothari was dead. It is said he asked some hermit there in the south: "Shall I vanquish and hold down the nation of the Lombards which now dwelleth in Italy?" The answer was as follows, and, rightly understood, contained at least the fundamental part of the truth: "The nation of the Lombards," said the hermit after a night of prayer, "cannot be overcome because a pious queen coming from a foreign land has built a church in honour of S. John Baptist who therefore pleads without ceasing for that people. But a time will come when that sanctuary will be held in contempt, and then the nation shall perish."[1]

That prophecy contained the fundamental truth that since the Lombards were Catholic it was not possible to turn them out of Italy. But Constans heeded it not. He marched on, besieged Beneventum, was not successful, and went on to Rome, and himself spoiled the City. From Rome he returned southward to Naples and Sicily, where in 668 he died.

All that time Gregory was exarch. He had succeeded Theodore Calliopas in 664, and he ruled till 677. We know little of him save that he appears to have attempted to confirm Maurus, archbishop of Ravenna, in his "independence".

[1] Paulus Diaconus, v. 6; cf. Hodgkin, *op. cit.* vi. 272. Paulus adds that the prophecy was fulfilled when adulterous and vile priests were ordained in the church at Monza and the Lombards fell before Pepin.

of the Papal See.[1] This Maurus was undoubtedly a schismatic and Agnellus tells us that he had many troubles with the Holy See and many altercations. Indeed the position of the archbishop of Ravenna can never have been a very enviable one and especially at this time when the breach between pope and emperor, papacy and empire, was continually widening. Always the archbishop of Ravenna, as the bishop of the imperial citadel in Italy, must have been tempted to follow the emperor rather than the pope, and more especially since, personally, he might expect to gain both in power and wealth that way.

The exarch Gregory was succeeded apparently by a certain Theodore whose contemporary archbishop in Ravenna was also a Theodore. He ruled it seems for ten years, 677-687, and built near his palace an oratory, or a monastery, not far from the church of S. Martin (S. Apollinare Nuovo), and was, according to Agnellus, a pious man, presenting three golden chalices to the church in Ravenna and composing the differences of his namesake the archbishop and his clergy.

Theodore in his turn was succeeded by Joannes Platyn (687-701). Two years before his appointment in 685 Justinian II. (685-695) had succeeded to the imperial throne, and in that same year pope Benedict II. died. John V. succeeded him and reigned for a few months, when there followed two disputed elections, those of Conon and of Sergius. In the latter Joannes Platyn the exarch played a miserable and disastrous part. For he suddenly appeared in Rome as the partisan of Paschal, the rival of Sergius, who had obtained his support by a promise of one hundred pounds of gold if he would help him to the papal throne. On his advent in Rome, however, the exarch found that he must abandon Paschal and consent to the election of Sergius, in which all

[1] That was the " Privilegium," whatever it was worth and whatever exactly it meant, conferred by Constans II. Constantine Pogonatus, the successor of Constans, is still to be seen in S. Apollinare in Classe the " Privilegium " in his hands in mosaic. See *infra*, p. 208.

concurred. He refused, however, to abandon his bribe which he now demanded of the new pope. Sergius replied that he had never promised anything to the exarch and that he could not pay the sum demanded. And he brought forth in the sight of the people the holy vessels of S. Peter, saying these were all he had. As the pope doubtless intended, the Romans were enraged against the exarch, the money was scraped together, and the holy vessels rescued.

In all this we see the growing distrust and hatred of Constantinople, which the taxation had first aroused on the part of the Italian people and their champion the papacy. These feelings were to be crystallised by the extraordinary and tactless council that the emperor convened in 691, in which the empire attempted to avenge the defeat it had sustained at the hands of the papacy in regard to the Monothelete heresy. The council, which was mainly concerned with discipline, altogether disregarded Western custom and the See of Rome, and especially asserted that "the patriarchal throne of Constantinople should enjoy the same privileges as that of Old Rome, and in all ecclesiastical matters should be entitled to the same pre-eminence and should count as second after it." The pope promptly forbade the publication of the decrees of this council which he had refused to sign. Then the emperor sent a truculent soldier, one Zacharias, to Rome with orders to seize Sergius and bring him to Constantinople as Martin had been arrested and dragged away. It only needed this to make the whole situation clear once and for all.

For it was not only the people of Rome who rose to prevent this outrageous act. When Zacharias landed in Ravenna, the citadel of the empire in Italy, the "army of Ravenna," no longer perhaps Byzantine mercenaries, but Italians, mutinied and determined to march to Rome to defend the pope. As they marched down the Flaminian Way, the soldiers of the Pentapolis joined them, a Holy War, a revolution, declared itself, and for this end: "We will not suffer the Pontiff

of the Apostolic See to be carried to Constantinople." This curious mob of soldiers, gathering force and recruits as it marched with songs and shouting down the Way, hurled itself against the walls of the Eternal City, battered down the gate of S. Peter which Zacharias, afraid and in tears, had ordered to be closed, and demanded to see the pope who was believed to have been spirited away in the night on board a Byzantine ship like his predecessor Martin. Zacharias took refuge under the pope's bed, and Sergius showed himself upon the balcony of the Lateran and was received with the wildest enthusiasm.

In that revolution was destroyed all hope of the Byzantine empire in Italy. A new vision had suddenly appeared to those whom we may call, and rightly now, the Italian people. The long resurrection of the West, the greatest miracle of the papacy, was upon that day secured for the future. And henceforth the mere appearance of the exarch in Rome was regarded as an insult and a declaration of war.

In the year 695 Justinian II. was deposed and mutilated by Leontius, but he was to appear again as emperor ten years later when Sergius was dead and John VII. sat on the throne of Peter. Pope John reigned but for three years, in which he was successfully bullied by Justinian. He was then succeeded by Sisinnius, who reigned for a few months, and then by Constantine who ruled for seven years (708-715). The archbishops of Ravenna had certainly not dared openly to side with the imperial party and the exarch during the revolution, but, with the restoration of Justinian, archbishop Felix (708-724) felt himself strong enough to oppose the pope when he categorically required of him an oath " to do nothing contrary to the unity of the Church and the safety of the empire." He had, however, chosen a bad time to set himself against his superior, who in the minds of all was the champion of Italy.

Justinian II. had by no means forgotten the injuries he had received at the hands of the Ravennati: " *ad Ravennam,*" says Agnellus, " *corda revolvens retorsit, et per noctem plurima*

volvens, infra se taliter agens; heu quid agam et contra Ravennam quæ exordia sumam?" "What can I do against Ravenna?" What he did was this. Theodore the patrician, one of his generals, was despatched with a fleet to Ravenna by way of Sicily. He proceeded up the Adriatic and when far off he saw the great imperial city, he first, according to Agnellus, lamented its fate, "for she shall be levelled with the ground which lifted her head to the clouds;" and then having landed and been greeted with due ceremony, set his camp on the banks of the Po a few hundred yards outside the city walls. There he invited all the chief men of the Ravennati to a banquet in the open air. As two by two they entered his tent to be presented to their host they were bound and gagged and put aboard ship. Thus all the nobles and Felix the archbishop were taken and the soldiers of Theodore entered Ravenna and burned their houses to the ground.

Theodore took his captives to Constantinople where they were all slain save Felix, who, however, was blinded. Later he returned to Ravenna, was reconciled with the Holy See, and died archbishop in 725.

It would appear that all this happened when Theophylact (702-709) was exarch, though Theodore the patrician may have superseded him for a moment on his arrival. The exarch in 710 was Joannes Rizocopus, and in that year pope Constantine visited Constantinople with the future pope Gregory II. in his train. They met in Rome, the pope about to set sail, the exarch on his way to Ravenna, where he was apparently assassinated in a popular tumult, "the just reward of his wickedness." The people of Ravenna then elected a certain Giorgius as their captain, and all the neighbouring cities, Cervia, Forlì, Forlimpopoli, and others, placed themselves under his government and turned upon the imperial troops. We know very little of this revolution, what directly was the cause of it, or how it was suppressed; but it is clear that the exarchate, if it did not actually perish, was from this time forth for all intents and purposes dead.

Three more exarchs were to reign in Ravenna, but not to govern. In 713, Scholasticus was appointed and remained till 726. He was followed by Paulus (726-727) who attempted to arrest Leo III., was prevented by the joint action of the Romans and the Lombards, and met his death at the hands of the people of Ravenna; and by Eutychius (727-752) who it seems saw the fall of Ravenna before the assault of the Lombard Aistulf. He was the last representative of the Byzantine empire to govern in Ravenna or in Italy.

But the fall of the imperial power in Italy was not the work of the Romans or of the Lombards. It fell because it had ceased to be Catholic.

We have seen the invasions of the Visigoths and the Huns fade away into nothing; we have seen the greater attempt of the Ostrogoths to found a kingdom in Italy brought to nought. One and all they failed for this fundamental reason, that they were not Catholic. The future belonged to Catholicism, and since it is only what is in the mind and the soul that is of any profound and lasting effect, to be Arian, to be heretic, was to fail. The great attempt, the noble attempt of Justinian to refound the empire in the West, to gather Italy especially once more into a universal government, succeeded, in so far as it did succeed, because the circumstances of the time in Italy forced it to be a pre-eminently Catholic movement. When that movement ceased to be Catholic it failed.

Let us be sure of this, for our whole understanding of the Dark Age depends upon it. Justinian's success in Italy was a Catholic success. What had always differentiated the imperialists from the barbarians since the fall of the old empire was their Catholicism. Justinian, a great Catholic emperor, perhaps the greatest, faced and outfaced the Arian Goths. He succeeded because his cause was the Catholic cause. But when his successors had to meet the Lombards they soon found that, for all they could do, they had no success. The Lombards, never very eagerly Arian, were open to conversion, slowly they became Catholic, and from the day they became

Catholic there was no longer any hope of turning them out of Italy. It is only what is in the mind that is of any fundamental account. Face to face with such a thing as religion, race is as a tale that is told. But though all hope of turning the Lombards out of Italy ceased with their conversion, and the plan of Justinian, with nothing as it were to kick against, was thus rendered a thousand times more difficult, it did not become utterly hopeless and impossible till the empire, the East, that is, Constantinople, fell into heresy and ceased itself to be Catholic. It was the gradual failure of Constantinople in Catholicism that disclosed the pope to the Italians as their champion. It was this failure that raised up even in the imperial citadel, even in Ravenna, men and armies passionately antagonistic to the emperor, passionately papal too. During a hundred years this movement grew till, in the eight century, the *coup de grâce*, as we might say, was given to the Justinian plan by the Iconoclastic heresy.

The Iconoclastic decrees of the emperor Leo are said to have appeared in Italy in the year 726. Leo was an adventurer from the mountains of Isauria. He was, so Gibbon tells us, "ignorant of sacred and profane letters; but his education, his reason, perhaps his intercourse with the Jews and the Arabs, had inspired the martial peasant with an hatred of images." It was his design to pronounce the condemnation of images as an article of faith by the authority of a general council. This, however, he was not able to do, for he was at once met and his iconoclasm pronounced heretical by the greatest of all opponents, the pope—Gregory II.

Gregory had been elected to the papacy in 715 upon the death of Constantine. He was a man of great strength of purpose and nobility of character. Upon the Lombard throne sat Liutprand whose boast it was that "his nation was Catholic and beloved of God," and who acknowledged the pope as "the head of all the churches and priests of God

through the world." These three men were the great protagonists who decided the fate of the empire in Italy.

The Lombards though they were thus Catholic had certainly not ceased to make war upon the empire. In this ceaseless quarrel, for instance, they had, perhaps about 720, possessed themselves of Classis, the seaport of Ravenna, and not long after of the fortress of Narni upon the Flaminian Way, and a little later, about 752, Liutprand himself laid siege to Ravenna, apparently without much result, though Classis seems to have suffered pillage. But if Ravenna did not then fall it was because the emperor's Iconoclastic decrees had not then reached Italy. They appear to have arrived in the following year and immediately the whole peninsula was aflame. "No image of any saint, martyr, or angel shall be retained in the churches," said Leo, "for all such things are accursed." The pope was told to acquiesce or to prepare to endure degradation and exile. Then, says Gibbon, surely here an unbiassed authority, "without depending on prayers or miracles, Gregory II. boldly armed against the public enemy and his pastoral letters admonished the Italians of their danger and their duty. At this signal Ravenna, Venice, and the cities of the Exarchate and Pentapolis adhered to the cause of religion; their military force by sea and land consisted for the most part of the natives; and the spirit of patriotism and zeal was transfused into the mercenary strangers. The Italians swore to live and die in the defence of the pope and the holy images; the Roman people were devoted to their Father and even the Lombards were ambitious to share the merit and advantage of this holy war. The most treasonable act, but the most obvious revenge, was the destruction of the statues of Leo himself; the most effectual and most pleasing measure of rebellion was the withholding of the tribute of Italy and depriving him of a power which he had recently abused by the imposition of a new duty."

The life of the pope was attempted by the imperial officials and the exarch appears to have been privy to the plot. The Romans rose and prevented the murder by slaying two of the conspirators, and when the exarch attempted to arrest the pope the very Lombards "flocked from all quarters" to defend him. In Ravenna itself there was revolution; Paulus the exarch was slain it seems in 727, and Ravenna apparently swore allegiance to the Holy See. Leo sent a fleet and an army to chastise her; "after suffering," says Gibbon, "from the wind and wave much loss and delay, the Greeks made their descent in the neighbourhood of Ravenna; they threatened to depopulate the guilty capital and to imitate, perhaps to surpass, the example of Justinian II. who had chastised a former rebellion by the choice and execution of fifty of the principal inhabitants. The women and clergy in sackcloth and ashes lay prostrate in prayer; the men were in arms for the defence of their country; the common danger had united the factions, and the event of a battle was preferred to the slow miseries of a siege. In a hard-fought day, as the two armies alternately yielded and advanced, a phantom was seen, a voice was heard, and Ravenna was victorious by the assurance of victory. The strangers retreated to their ships, but the populous sea-coast poured forth a multitude of boats; the waters of the Po were so deeply infected with blood that during six years the public prejudice abstained from the fish of the river; and the institution of an annual feast perpetuated the worship of images and the abhorrence of the Greek tyrant."

So Gibbon, following Agnellus whose account is obscure and perhaps altogether untrustworthy. What is certain is that Liutprand was advancing against the empire in war; that he took Bologna and without difficulty made himself master of the whole of the Pentapolis.

Yet the emperor took no heed. The eunuch Eutychius was appointed as exarch. He appeared in Naples and sent orders to Rome to have the pope murdered; but again the

Roman people saved their champion and swore to him a new allegiance. Then Eutychius turned to the Lombards.

He attempted to bribe both Liutprand and the dukes. At first he was unsuccessful, but presently they began to listen to him. Liutprand certainly hoped to make himself king of Italy, and it may be that it was this which Eutychius offered him under the emperor. Moreover, he was jealous, and not without cause, of the dukes of Spoleto and Benevento, who had rallied to the pope, and was anxious to have them under his feet. This, too, he may have hoped to attain as King of Italy and the emperor's representative in Italy.

When the pope saw Liutprand march southward with the exarch he must have known that the whole of the future depended upon the outcome of this act. Liutprand presently encamped with his army in the plain of Nero between the Vatican and Monte Mario. There the pope met him and, even as Leo the Great had done upon the banks of the Mincio, and as Gregory the Great had done upon the steps of S. Peter's, overawed the barbarian. Liutprand laid his crown and his sword at the pope's feet and begged, not only for his own forgiveness, but for that of the exarch his ally. The moment of enormous danger passed, the pope received both his enemies; but from that moment it was evident that the Lombards were not to be trusted and must one day feel the weight of the papal arm.

Gregory died in February 731, and was succeeded by Gregory III. who continued his predecessor's Italian policy. The great and terrible danger which had suddenly threatened the whole of papal policy when Liutprand and the exarch approached one another seems to have haunted the third Gregory. His obvious defence was to support the dukes against Liutprand, and this he did. Liutprand marched down against him and seized several towns in the duchy of Rome. It is now that the future begins to declare itself. The pope in his peril, a peril that would presently increase, made an

appeal to the great Christian champion, Charles Martel; he appealed to the Franks; in the event, as we know, it was the Franks who saved the situation. In 740, however, Charles Martel refused to interfere; he was the kinsman of Liutprand and his son was a guest at the court of Pavia; that son was to be king Pepin the Deliverer—the father of Charlemagne, the first emperor of the restored West.

That appeal for help was in all probability not made only on account of the threat of Liutprand against Rome. It was obvious and more and more obvious that the imperial power in Italy was about to dissolve. What was to take its place? The papacy? Yes, but the state of Italy, the hostility of Liutprand, the whole attitude and condition of the Lombards, forced upon the papacy the necessity of finding a champion, a soldier and an army. That champion Gregory hoped to find in Charles Martel; his successors found him in Charles's son Pepin and in Charlemagne.

I say the appeal of the pope for help was not made only on account of the Lombard threat against Rome. It was the sudden dissolution of the imperial power that called it forth. In or about 737, the city of Ravenna, as we may believe, was besieged and taken by Liutprand and for some three years remained in his hands, till at the united prayers of exarch and pope the Venetians fitted out a fleet and recaptured it for the empire as we may think in 740.[1]

We know nothing of that siege and capture and practically nothing of the splendid victory of the Venetians. But the tremendous significance of the fall of Ravenna, which had been the impregnable seat of the empire in Italy since Belisarius entered it in 540, must not escape us. Rightly understood it made necessary all that followed.

At this dramatic moment the Emperor Leo died, to be

[1] I follow Hodgkin, vi. p. 482 *et seq.*, and Appendix F. Cf. also for discussion as to the date, Pinton in *Archivio Veneto* (1889), pp. 368-384, and Monticolo in *Archivio della R. S. Romana di St. Pat.* (1892), pp. 321-365.

followed in 741 by Pope Gregory and Charles Martel. Gregory was succeeded by Pope Zacharias, who in the year of his election met Liutprand at Narni and obtained from him the restoration of the four frontier towns he had taken two years before. But though Rome was thus secured Ravenna was in worse danger than ever, for Liutprand now renewed his attack upon it and it was only the intervention of the pope in person at Pavia that saved the city. Zacharias set forth along the Flaminian Way; at Aquila perhaps near Rimini the exarch met him, and he entered Ravenna in triumph, the whole city coming out to meet him. In spite of the opposition of Liutprand he made his way to Pavia, and was successful in persuading him to give up his attempt to take the once impregnable city and to restore much he had captured. Liutprand was an old man; perhaps he was not hard to persuade, for he was on the eve of his death, which came to him in 744. His successor Hildeprand reigned for six months and was deposed. Ratchis became king, a pious man who made truce with the pope, and in 749 abdicated and entered a monastery. Aistulf was chosen king, and at once turned his thoughts to Ravenna. The crisis so long foreseen, so often prevented by the papacy, came at last with great suddenness. In 751 Ravenna fell and the Byzantine empire in Italy thereby came to an end.

We know nothing of this tremendous affair; we do not know whether the great imperial city, full of all the strange wonder of Byzantium, and heavy with the destiny of Europe, was taken suddenly by assault or after a long siege. We know only that it fell, and that Aistulf was master there in the year of our Lord 751.

A sort of silence followed that fall. In 752 Pope Zacharias died. His successor was never consecrated, but died within three days of his election and made way for Pope Stephen. In the confusion of all things it is said that a party in Rome urged Aistulf to usurp the empire. This was enough; it might have been, and perhaps was, expected. The pope had

his answer ready. The heir of the empire in Italy was not the Lombard but the Holy See. Aistulf threatened to invade Roman territory, and, indeed, occupied Ceccano in the duchy of Rome. Again the pope had his answer. That answer was the appeal to Pepin and his Franks. The papacy had found a champion.

X

THE PAPAL STATE

PEPIN AND CHARLEMANGE

THE appeal of Stephen, which was to have for its result the resurrection of the empire in the West and the establishment of the papacy as a temporal power and sovereignty, was made in a letter now lost to us, which a pilgrim on his way back to France from Rome carried to Pepin the king of the Franks. In reply to it, the abbot of Jumièges appeared in Rome as Pepin's ambassador to invite the pope himself to cross the Alps.

Meantime two events occurred, which cannot but have hardened the resolve of the pope to find a champion. These events were the occupation of Ceccano in the duchy of Rome by Aistulf and the appeal of the emperor to the pope that he should go to Pavia and attempt to persuade the Lombard king to give up Ravenna and the cities he had lately taken. The appeal of the emperor must have assured the pope, if indeed he had any doubt about it, that the emperor, so far as Italy was concerned, was helpless; while the occupation of Ceccano made it doubly obvious that the Lombard intended, now that the empire was helpless, to be absolute master throughout the peninsula.

Stephen considered what course he should pursue, received two other Frankish envoys in Rome, consented to go to Pavia on behalf of the emperor, and determined at the same time to visit Pepin in the north. He set out for Pavia upon October 13, 753, leaving Rome with a vast concourse of

S. GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA.

(Exhib. R.A. 1911)

people, which accompanied him some distance along the Way, out of the Flaminian Gate. His mission on behalf of the empire was naturally entirely fruitless, and early in November the pope left Pavia with the hardly won consent of Aistulf to cross the Alps by the Great S. Bernard—a difficult and dangerous business at that time of year—and to meet the Frankish king at S. Maurice in the valley of the Rhone. In the latter he was disappointed. Pepin had been called away to deal with an incursion of the Saxons, and now awaited his amazing visitor at Ponthion in Champagne, but he sent his son Charles, destined to be the first emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, a hundred miles down the long roads to meet the pope, and it was in the company of this youthful hero that upon the Feast of the Epiphany 754 Stephen entered Ponthion at last, and was greeted by Pepin, who cast himself upon the ground before him and walked as his lackey beside him as he rode.

The result of their interview is given in the *Liber Pontificalis:* "The most blessed pope tearfully besought the said most Christian king that by means of a treaty of peace (? with him the pope) he would dispose of the cause of the blessed Peter and the republic of the Romans, who by an oath there and then (de præsenti) satisfied the most blessed pope that he would obey all his commands and admonitions with all his strength and that it pleased him to restore by every means the exarchate of Ravenna and the rights and territories of the republic." [1]

That winter the pope spent at S. Denis, where he solemnly crowned Pepin and his queen, and Charles and Carloman their children, pronouncing an anathema upon all or any who

[1] As this is very important I give the original Latin: "Ibidem beatissmus Papa præfatum Christianissimum regem lacrimabiliter deprecatus est ut per pacis fœdera causam beati Petri et reipublicæ Romanorum disponeret. Qui de præsenti jurejurando eundem beatissimum Papam satisfecit omnibus ejus mandatis et ammonitionibus sese totis nisibus obedire, et ut illi placitum fuerit Exarchatum Ravennæ et reipublicæ jura seu loca reddere modis omnibus."

should ever attempt to elect a king not of their house. Upon Pepin too he conferred the title of patrician. Can it be that by this he intended the king of the Franks to be his executor in the exarchate as the exarch had been the executor of the emperor?[1] We do not know; but a little later a document was drawn up in which Pepin declared and enumerated the territories he was ready to secure for the pope. This document, the Donation of Pepin, would seem to have confirmed in detail and in writing the oath he had sworn to the pope at Ponthion. Unhappily the document has disappeared, and we can only judge of its contents by what actually happened.

The adventure into Italy to which the pope had persuaded Pepin was not universally popular with the Frankish nobles. We find Pepin attempting to gain his end by negotiation with Aistulf, but all to no purpose, and probably in March 755 the Franks set out with the pope at their head to march into Italy to curb and chastise the Lombard.

The great army of Pepin crossed the Alps by the Mont Cenis, and in what was little more than a skirmish upon the northern side of the pass defeated the Lombard army and proceeded to invest Pavia and ravish the country round about. Aistulf, who was rather an impetuous than a great soldier, had soon had enough and was ready to entertain proposals for peace. A treaty was made in which he agreed "to restore" Ravenna and divers other cities, and to attempt nothing in the future against Rome and the Holy See. This having been decided, the pope took leave of Pepin, who returned to France, and went on his way to Rome.

The pope had won and had really established the Holy See as the heir of the empire; but Aistulf was by no means done with. He forgot alike his treaty and his promises. "Ever since the day when we parted," the pope writes to Pepin and the young kings, his sons Charles and Carloman, "he has striven to put upon us such afflictions and on the Holy Church

[1] The title patrician was not exclusively borne by the exarch; the Dux Romæ, for instance, bore that title in 743.

of God such insults as the tongue of man cannot declare. . . . You have made peace too easily, you have taken no sufficient security for the fulfilment of the promises you have made to S. Peter, which you yourselves guaranteed by writing under your hand and seal. . . ."

But the Franks were deaf. An expedition to crush the Lombards was a laborious and an expensive business, and Pepin had much to occupy him at home.

In January 756, however, Aistulf, mad from the start, laid siege to Rome, and for three months laid waste the farms of the Campagna, S. Peter's patrimony. Narni was taken and indeed all seemed as hopeless as ever. Then the pope took up his pen and as the successor of the Prince of the Apostles wrote a letter as from S. Peter himself and sent it to the three kings, Pepin, Charles, and Carloman, to the bishops, abbots, priests and monks, the dukes, counts, armies, and people of Francia. Gibbon thus summarises this extraordinary and dramatic epistle: "The apostle assures his adoptive sons the king, the clergy, and the nobles of France that dead in the flesh, he is still alive in the spirit; that they now hear and must obey the voice of the founder and guardian of the Roman Church; that the Virgin, the angels, the saints, and the martyrs, and all the host of heaven unanimously urge the request, and will confess the obligation; that riches, victory, and paradise will crown their pious enterprise; and that eternal damnation will be the penalty of their neglect, if they suffer his tomb, his temple, and his people to fall into the hands of the perfidious Lombards."

Pepin could not be deaf to such an appeal. He again crossed the Mont Cenis, and again the Lombards were as chaff before him. On his march to Pavia he was met by two envoys from Constantinople who had ill-treated, detained, and outstripped the papal ambassador. They besought Pepin to restore Ravenna and the exarchate to the empire, but he denied them and declared roundly that "on no account whatsoever should those cities be alienated from the power of the

blessed Peter and the jurisdiction of the Roman Church and the Apostolic See, affirming too with an oath that for no man's favour had he given himself once again to this conflict, but only for love of S. Peter and for the pardon of his sins; asserting, also, that no abundance of treasure would bribe him to take away what he had once offered for S. Peter's acceptance." [1]

Pepin marched on; Pavia was besieged, Aistulf was beaten to the dust. A treaty was drawn up in which the Lombard gave to "S. Peter, the Holy Roman Church, and all the popes of the Apostolic See forever" the Exarchate, the Pentapolis, and Comacchio. An officer was commissioned to receive the submission of every city, and their keys and the deed of Pepin's donation were placed upon the tomb of S. Peter in Rome. The papal state was founded; where the empire had ruled so long there appeared the heir of the empire, the papacy "sitting crowned upon the grave thereof."

The cities that with their *contadi* and dependencies thus formed the temporal dominion of the pope were, according to the papal biographer, twenty-three in number; Ravenna first and foremost, then Rimini, Pesaro, Fano, Sinigaglia (but not Ancona) that had formed the old Pentapolis. To them was added La Cattolica. The whole of the inland Pentapolis—though Fossombrone is not mentioned—Urbino, Jesi, Cagli, Gubbio—passed to the pope as well as the following places: Cesena and the Mons Lucatium, Forlimpopoli, Forlì, Castro, Caro, S. Leo, Arcevia, Serra dei Conti, the Republic of S. Marino, Sarsina, and Cantiano together with Comacchio and Narni. A few months after all this was accomplished, in December 756, Aistulf, "that follower of the devil," as the pope called him, died.

Every state that is nearing dissolution is the prey of civil discord. So it was with the Lombards. Ratchis, who had more than seven years before become a monk, claimed the throne; so did Desiderius, "mildest of men." Pope Stephen

[1] Cf. Hodgkin, *op. cit.* vii. p. 217.

supported the latter on condition that Ancona, that last city of the Pentapolis, Osimo which dominated it, and Umana, together with Faenza, Imola, and Ferrara, were "restored" to the papacy. Desiderius agreed and became king, but failed, as the Lombards always failed, to keep his promise, for though he handed over Faenza, Bagnacavallo, and Gavello, he withheld Imola, Bologna, Ancona, Osimo, and Umana; this was in 757, the year of Stephen's death.

In the same year Pope Paul I. seems to have visited the chief city of his new state, Ravenna, mainly perhaps on ecclesiastical business, for the archbishop Sergius was by no means a loyal subject and had only been brought to heel when nothing but submission was left open to him. He had then, according to Agnellus, promised to deliver to the pope all the "gold, silver, vessels of price, hoards of money," and so forth stored up in Ravenna. Agnellus tells a long and incoherent tale of the way the pope obtained this treasure and of certain plots to murder him therefor. All that seems fairly certain is that in the first year of his reign pope Paul I. visited Ravenna. Indeed the chief difficulty of the papacy at this time must have been the occupation of the state it had won so consummately. How were the popes to make good their somewhat shadowy hold upon Ravenna, and the Pentapolis, and those other strongholds in central Italy and Æmilia?

That they were not to hold them easily was soon evident. The empire was plotting to win Pepin to its side, and when that failed again, rumours of an imperial invasion reached Rome. Politically all relations ceased between Constantinople and Rome about this time; for though the pope in reality had long ceased to be a subject of the emperor, when he had possessed himself of the exarchate even theory had to give way to fact. Nor was the papacy more fortunate in its relations with Desiderius. The pope's object was doubtless to keep the Lombard kingdom weak, if not to destroy it. The first step to that end was obviously to encourage the achievement of a real independence by the duchies of Spoleto and Bene-

vento, which, again, bordering as they did upon the duchy of Rome, would be easier to deal with if they stood alone. There can be little doubt that the pope fostered the sleepless disaffection of the dukes, but when their revolt matured Desiderius was able to crush it, laying waste the Pentapolis on his way. He was then wise enough to visit Rome and to arrange a peace which was only once broken during pope Paul's pontificate: in 761 when Desiderius attacked Sinigaglia.

It was easier, however, for the pope to arrange successfully a foreign policy than to administer his new state. No machinery existed for the secular government by the Holy See of a country so considerable; nor was this easy to invent. The pope was forced to fall back upon his representative in Ravenna, namely, the archbishop. Now the archbishops of Ravenna had always been lacking in loyalty. Ravenna and the exarchate were governed in the name of the pope by the archbishop, assisted by three tribunes who were elected by the people. This government was never very successful, for at every opportunity, and especially after the resurrection of the empire in the West, the archbishops were eager to consider themselves as feudatories of the empire. This was natural and it may be worth while briefly to inquire why.

Because Ravenna had for so long, ever since the year 404, been the seat of the empire in Italy, the bishops of that city had acquired extraordinary privileges and even a unique position among the bishops of the West. As early as the time of Galla Placidia, the bishop of Ravenna had obtained from the Augusta the title and rights of metropolitan of the fourteen cities of Æmilia and Flaminia. It is true that the bishop continued to be confirmed and consecrated by the pope—S. Peter Chrysologus was so confirmed and consecrated—but the presence of the imperial court and later of the exarch encouraged in the minds of the bishops a sense of their unique importance and a certain spirit of independence in regard to Rome. Of course the Holy See was not prepared to cede any

of its rights; but the spirit of disloyalty remained, and presently the bishop of Ravenna at the time of his consecration was forced to sign a declaration of loyalty, in which was set forth his chief duties and a definition of his rights.

After the Byzantine conquest the church of Ravenna, which the empire regarded as a bulwark against the papal claims, received important privileges and its importance in the ecclesiastical hierarchy was greatly increased. Like the bishop of Rome, the bishop of Ravenna had a special envoy at Constantinople and was represented, again like Rome, in a special manner in the councils of the Orient. In religious ceremonies the bishops of Ravenna took a place imme diately behind the pope, and in ecclesiastical assemblies they sat at the right hand of the pontiff. There can be little doubt indeed of the Erastianism of Justinian nor of his encouragement of the bishop of Ravenna.

The declaration that the bishops were forced to sign upon their consecration by the pope by no means settled matters. In 648 this declaration itself was in dispute as to its interpretation, for Constans II. had conferred upon the See of Ravenna the privilege of autonomy, and at this time the bishop did not go to Rome for consecration. The Iconoclastic heresy of Constantinople, however, indirectly brought about peace between the pope and his suffragan, for Ravenna was in this whole heartedly Roman.

It was then, by means of an instrument still very uncertain, that the papacy was forced to govern its new state, and in these circumstances, friendly relationship with Constantinople daily becoming more impossible, it is not surprising that we see the pope making an attempt to come to some sort of permanent reconciliation with Desiderius; and indeed when pope Paul died in 767 undoubtedly a peace had been arranged.

All might have been well if pope Paul's successor had been regularly chosen; but a layman Constantine was elected by a rabble at the instigation of his brother Toto of Nepi. Christopher and his son Sergius, who held two of the greatest

offices in the papal chancery, decided to call in the aid of the duke of Spoleto to attack Constantine, Rome was entered, and in the appalling confusion the Lombards elected a certain priest named Philip to be pope. Christopher appeared, Philip was turned out, and Stephen III., a Sicilian, was regularly chosen. That was in 768, and in the same year king Pepin died and was succeeded by his two sons, Charles to whom apparently fell Austrasia and Neustria, and Carloman who took Burgundy, Provence, and Swabia.

The death of Pepin left the papacy without a champion. Nor was this all, as soon appeared. Charles and Carloman began to quarrel and to effect their reconciliation, or to avert its consequences, Bertrada, their mother, counselled and succeeded in forcing upon them a friendship and an alliance with the Lombards which meant the complete abandonment of Italy upon the part of the Franks. This alliance was to be secured by a double marriage. Charles was to marry Desiderata, the daughter of the Lombard king, while Gisila, Bertrada's daughter, was to marry Desiderius' heir. It is obvious that S. Peter was in peril, nor was pope Stephen slow to denounce the whole arrangement. His remonstrance, however, was ineffectual and there remained to him but one thing to do: to arrange himself with the now uncurbed Lombard king. This was exceedingly difficult, because his own election had been achieved only by the humiliation of the Lombards. However, he managed it at the price of civil war. Desiderius and his army entered Rome at the behest of the pope, who celebrated Mass before the king in S. Peter's. The Franks were checkmated.

It was not long before Charles saw that he had been outwitted. An immediate change of his policy was necessary. In 771 it came with the repudiation of Desiderata, who was sent back to her father's court at Pavia. Henceforth Charles and Desiderius were implacable enemies. And now everything went in favour of the papal policy, just as before everything had seemed to cross it. Carloman, who had not

quarrelled with Desiderius, and might have opposed Charles and changed all the future, suddenly died in December of the year of the quarrel. Charles became thus sole king of the Frankish nation. When pope Stephen came to die in February 772 he must have laid him down with a quiet mind.

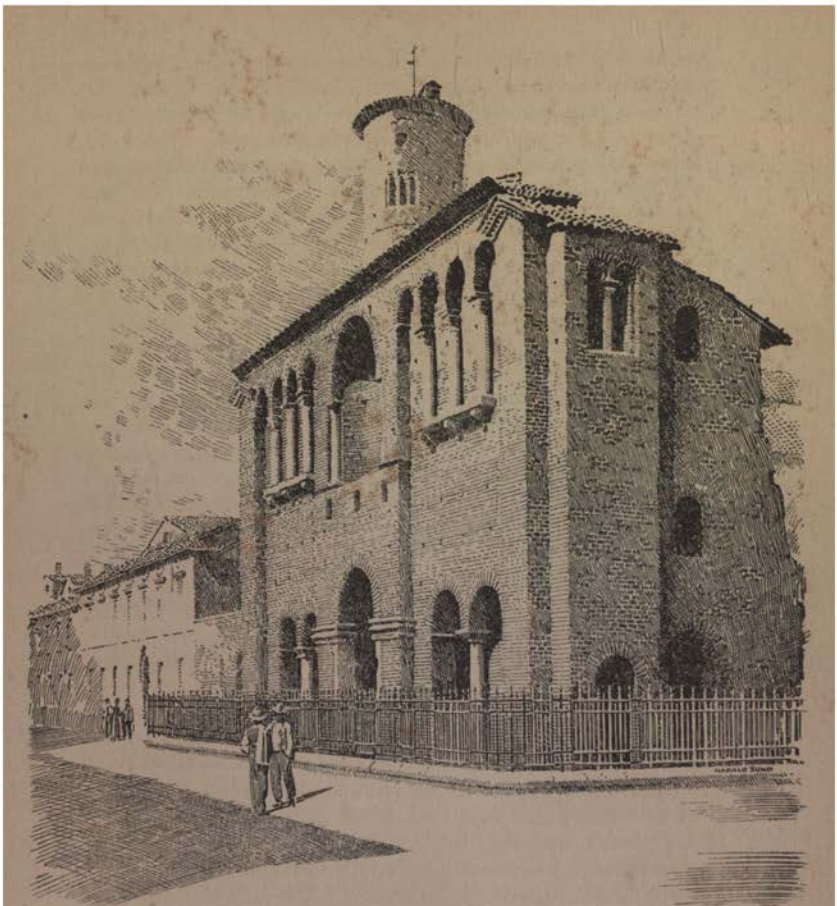
In Stephen's stead there was elected as pope a pure Roman, born in the Via Lata of the nobility of the City; he took the famous name of Hadrian I. Desiderius, who had watched with a growing anxiety the amazing policy of Stephen, now turned to his successor, and both demanded and begged a renewal of friendship. Hadrian answered his ambassador at last with the mere truth. "How can I trust your king when I recall what my predecessor Lord Stephen of pious memory told me in confidence of his perfidy? He told me that he had lied to him in everything as to the rights of Holy Church, though he swore upon the body of the Blessed Peter. . . . Look you, such is the honour of king Desiderius and the measure of the confidence I may repose in him."

Desiderius' answer was not to the point. He seized the cities of Faenza, Ferrara, and Comacchio and ravaged the territory about Ravenna, burned the farms and carried off the cattle. Then he fell upon the Pentapolis, seized Sinigaglia, Jesi, Urbino, Gubbio, S. Leo, and other "Roman" cities, and indeed possessed himself of everything save only Ravenna and Rimini, and proceeded upon a raid into the duchy of Rome.

The answer of the pope was mild but firm: mild, for the hour was not yet come; firm, for it would strike ere long. "Tell your king," said he, "that I swear in the presence of God that if he choose to restore those cities which in my time he has taken from S. Peter, I will hasten into his presence wherever he may appoint a meeting place, at Pavia, Ravenna, Perugia, or here in Rome, that we may confer together. . . . But if he does not restore what he has taken away he shall never see my face."

The hour was not come. Charles was busy with the Saxon hordes upon the north and east of his kingdom. It was not till the beginning of January 773 that the pope sent his messenger Peter to summon him to his aid. Meanwhile, Desiderius marched on Rome. But even without Charles the pope was not defenceless. The Vicegerent of God who had without a soldier turned back Attila on the Mincio and had thrust back Liutprand from Rome was not to be at the mercy of such a king as Desiderius. At Viterbo his messengers, the three bishops of Albano, Palestrina, and Tivoli, met the Lombard king and gave him the pope's last word: "Anathema." Desiderius shrank back. In that moment as it seems the ambassadors of Charles arrived in Rome, satisfied themselves of the justice of the papal summons, and carried back to the great Frank the prayer of the pope that he would "redeem the Church of God." In the late summer of that year the Frankish host was assembled at Geneva and was already beginning to cross the mountains in two mighty commands by the Great S. Bernard and the Mont Cenis; in October the siege of Pavia was begun.

That siege endured for more than eight months. Meanwhile Charles had made himself master of Verona and of many of the cities of the plain. The men of Spoleto hastened to "commend" themselves to the pope and the citizens of Fermo, Osimo, and Ancona, and of Città di Castello, we read, followed their example, and for the feast of Easter 774, Charles appeared in Rome, and was greeted and embraced by the pope at S. Peter's. On Easter Day Charles heard Mass in S. Maria Maggiore, on Easter Monday in S. Peter's, on Easter Tuesday in S. Paul's. On the Wednesday in that Easter week, according to Hadrian's biographer, he made that great Donation to the papacy which confirmed and extended and secured the gift of Pepin his father. The duchies of Spoleto and Benevento, and much else, were added to the exarchate "as it was of old" and given to the pope. Then in June Pavia, the Lombard capital, fell and Desiderius and his



GUARDHOUSE OF THE PALACE OF THEODORIC

wife were sent by Charles as prisoners to a convent in Picardy where it is said they ended their lives.

The Donation of Pepin, confirmed, renewed, and enlarged by Charles, may, of course, be understood in various ways; at any rate it has been so understood; but it is certain that the pope saw in it both the fulfilment of his hopes and the final establishment of the papal monarchy. Yet while he utterly refused, and rightly, to admit the claim of Charles—not yet emperor—to interfere in the election of the archbishop of Ravenna, the head of his new dominion, he graciously permitted the king to take away certain mosaics from the old imperial city to adorn his palace at Aix; and that in the following letter, which Dr. Hodgkin translates: "We have received your bright and honeysweet letters brought us by Duke Arwin. In these you expressed your desire that we should grant you the mosaics and marbles of the palace in the city of Ravenna, as well as other specimens to be found both in the pavement and on the walls. We willingly grant your request because by your royal struggles the Church of your patron S. Peter daily enjoys many benefits, for which great will be your reward in heaven. . . ." On no theory yet put forward can the pope be considered as the subject of the king of the Franks. That he had been and was to be the subject of the emperor can be defended, but when has S. Peter been the creature of a king?

It was not Hadrian as we know but Leo who was destined to crown what pope Stephen had begun, and to re-establish the empire in the West, and as he thought to create for S. Peter not an occasional but a permanent champion.

Twenty-five years after that great Easter in Rome, pope Leo, who succeeded Hadrian, whose long pontificate lasted for twenty-three years, was attacked in the streets of Rome and thrown to the ground in the Corso by two nephews of Hadrian's. Exactly what was the nature of their quarrel with Leo we do not know, but they managed to imprison the pope, who presently escaped and, assisted by Winichis, duke

of Spoleto, made his way to the court of Charles. During the summer of 799 the pope remained in France, and probably in October returned to Rome with a Frankish guard of honour. In the following autumn Charles set out on his fourth journey to Rome. It was now that he visited Ravenna, as he had already done in 787, and remained for seven days. On the 24th November he arrived in Rome. A month later upon Christmas Day the great king, attended by his nobles, amid a vast multitude, went to S. Peter's to hear Mass. It was there in the midst of that great basilica, before the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles, that upon the birthday of Christ the empire re-arose; the pope placed upon the head of Charlemagne the golden diadem and the Roman people cried aloud, "*Carolo Piissimo Augusto Deo, Coronato Magno a Pacifico Imperatori Vita et Victoria.*" Three times that great acclamation echoed over the tomb of the Fisherman. Once more there was an emperor in the West, a champion of the Faith and defender of the Holy See.

It has been asserted, and is still I believe maintained, that that coronation was a surprise to Charles. But such things do not come unforeseen, nor was Charlemagne the man to permit or to tolerate so amazing an astonishment. All Rome knew what was about to be accomplished and had gathered in the ancient basilica to await it and complete it.

Such a question, however, concerns us but little. For us it remains to note that with the re-creation of the empire, and the appearance of the Holy See as a great temporal sovereignty in Italy, the historical importance of Ravenna comes to an end. We have seen that in the autumn of the most famous year save that of the birth of Our Lord, Charlemagne had visited Ravenna and had spent seven days in the city. Once more he was to visit it, and that upon his return journey northward in May 801. From this time Ravenna ceases to be of any significance in the history of Europe. The pass it held was no longer of importance, for the barbarian invasions were at an end, and a new road into Italy over the

Apennines was coming into use, the Via Francigena, the way of the Franks. As the port upon the sea which was the fault between East and West it, too, ceased to exist; for East and West were no longer of any real importance the one to the other, and already the alteration of the coast line, which was one day to leave the old seaport some miles from the shore, had begun.

The history of Ravenna, her importance in the history of Europe and Italy, thus comes to an end with the appearance of Charlemagne and the resurrection of the West. The ancient and beautiful city which had played so great a part in the fortunes of the empire, which had, as it were, twice been its birthplace and twice its tomb, herself passes into oblivion when that empire, Holy now and Roman still, rises again and in the West with the crowning of Charlemagne in S. Peter's Church upon Christmas Day in the year of Our Lord 800. With her subsequent story, interesting to us mainly in two of its episodes—the apparition of Dante and the incident of 1512 — I shall deal when I come to consider the Mediæval and Renaissance city.

But in fact we always think of Ravenna as a city of the Dark Age, and in that we are right. She is a tomb, the tomb of the old empire, and like the sepulchre outside the gates of Jerusalem, that was Arimathean Joseph's, she held during an appalling interval of terror and doubt the most precious thing in the world, to be herself utterly forgotten in the morning of the resurrection. And surely to one who had approached her in the dawn, while it was yet dark, of the ninth century, of mediæval Europe that is, her words would have been those of the angels so long ago: *Non est hic; sed surrexit.* While to us to-day she would say: *Venite et videte locum ubi positus erat Dominus.*

XI

THE CATHOLIC CHURCHES OF THE FIFTH CENTURY

THE CATHEDRAL, BAPTISTERY, ARCIVESCOVADO, S. AGATA, S. PIETRO MAGGIORE, S. GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA, S. GIOVANNI BATTISTA, AND THE MAUSOLEUM OF GALLA PLACIDIA

RAVENNA, as we see her to-day, is like no other city in Italy. As in her geography and in her history, so in her aspect, she is a place apart, a place very distinctive and special, and with a physiognomy and appearance all her own. What we see in her is still really the city of Honorius, of Galla Placidia, of Theodoric, of Belisarius and Narses, of the exarchate, in a word, of the mighty revolution in which Europe, all we mean by Europe, so nearly foundered, and which here alone is still splendidly visible to us in the great Roman and Byzantine works of that time.

For the age, the Dark Age, of her glory is illumined by no other city in Italy or indeed in the world. She was the splendour of that age, a lonely splendour. And because, when that age came to an end, she was practically abandoned —abandoned, that is, by the great world—just as about the same time she was abandoned by the sea, much of her ancient beauty has remained to her through all the centuries since, even down to our own day, when, lovelier than ever in her lonely marsh, she is a place so lugubrious, so infinitely still

and sad, full of the autumn wind and the rumours of silence of the tomb, of the most reverent of all tombs—the tomb of the empire.

We shall not find in Ravenna anything at all, any building, that is, or work of art, of classical antiquity; all she was, all she did, all she possessed in the great years of the empire has perished. Nor shall we find much that may have been hers in the smaller life that came to her in the beginning of the Middle Age, or that was hers in the time of the Renaissance; the memory and the dust of Dante, a few churches, a few frescoes, a few pictures, a few palaces; nothing beside. For all these we must go to Pompeii and to Rome, or to Florence, Siena, Assisi, and Venice; in Ravenna we shall find something more rare, but not these. She remains a city of the Dark Age, of the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, and she is full of the churches, the tombs, and the art of that time, early Christian and Byzantine things that we shall not find elsewhere, or, at any rate, not in the same abundance, perfection, and beauty.

And yet though so much remains, her story since the time of Charlemagne might seem to be little else but a long catalogue of pillage and destruction. Charlemagne himself began this cruel work when he carried off the mosaics and the marbles, the ornaments of the imperial palace, to adorn Aix-la-Chapelle, and since his day not a century has passed without adding to this vandalism; the worst offenders being the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, which by rebuilding, by frank pillage, by mere destruction, by earthquakes, by contempt, and worst of all by restoration have utterly destroyed much that should have remained for ever, and have altogether spoilt and transformed most of that which, almost by chance it might seem, remains.

And so it comes to pass that the oldest buildings remaining to us to-day in Ravenna are to be found in the baptistery, the cathedral, the arcivescovado, and the mausoleum of Galla

Placidia, the oldest complete building being the last. Let us then first consider these.

The first bishop, the "Apostle" of Ravenna, according to Agnellus, was S. Apollinaris, a Syrian of Antioch, the friend and disciple of S. Peter, who, as we know, had been bishop of Antioch for seven years before he went to Rome. Apollinaris followed S. Peter to the Eternal City and was appointed by him bishop of Ravenna, whither he came to establish the church. There might seem to be some doubt as to his martyrdom; but, according to Agnellus, he was succeeded by his disciple S. Aderitus, and he in his turn by S. Eleucadius, a theologian, who is said to have written commentaries upon the books of the Old and New Testaments, and to have been followed as bishop by S. Martianus, a noble whom S. Apollinaris had ordained deacon. There follows in the *Liber Pontificalis* of Agnellus a list of twelve bishops, S. Calocerus, S. Proculus, S. Probus, S. Datus, S. Liberius, S. Agapetus, S. Marcellinus, S. Severus (*c.* 344), S. Liberius II., S. Probus II., S. Florentius, and S. Liberius III., who occupy the see before we come to S. Ursus, who "first began to build a Temple to God, so that the Christians previously scattered about in huts should be collected into one sheepfold."[1] S. Ursus, according to Dr. Holder-Egger, ruled in Ravenna from 370 to 396, and his church was dedicated in 385; but a later authority[2] would seem to place his pontificate later, and to argue that it immediately preceded that of S. Peter Chrysologus, who, the same authority asserts, was elected in 429. All agree that S. Ursus reigned for twenty-six years, and therefore, if he immediately preceded S. Peter Chrysologus, he was elected not

[1] "Iste primus hic initiavit Templum construere Dei, ut plebes Christianorum quæ in singulis tuguriis vagabant in unum ovile piissimus collegeret Pastor . . . Igitur ædificavit iste Beatissimus Præsul infra hanc Civitatem Ravennam Sanctam Ecclesiam Catholicam, quo omnes assidue concurremus, quam de suo nomine Ursianam nominavit. . . ."

[2] A. Testi Rasponi, *Note Marginali al Liber Pontificalis di Agnello Ravennate* in *Atti e Memorie della R. Dep. di St. Pat. per la Romagna*, iii. 27 (Bologna, 1909-10).

in 370, but in 403; that is to say, in or about the same time as Honorius took up his residence in Ravenna.

However that may be, we must attribute the foundation of a new cathedral church in Ravenna to S. Ursus, for till this day it bears his name, Ecclesia Ursiana, though it appears

THE CATHEDRAL (*Basilica Ursiana*)

to have been dedicated in honour of the Resurrection (Anastasis.)

Agnellus gives us a fairly full account of this church, which consisted of five naves divided and upheld by four rows of fifty-six [1] columns of precious marble from the temple of Jupiter. That the church was approached by steps we learn

[1] Fabri, however, in his *Sacre Memorie*, says there were forty-nine columns.

from Agnellus in his life of S. Exuperantius, for he there tells us that Felix the patrician was killed "on the steps of the Ecclesia Ursiana." Both the vault and the walls were adorned with mosaics,[1] which Agnellus describes and which would seem to have covered then or later the whole of the interior; the wall on the women's side of the church being decorated with a figure of S. Anastasia, while over all was a dome "adorned with various coloured tiles representing different figures." When Agnellus wrote (ninth century) this great church was of course standing, but doubtless it had been added to and adorned from century to century, and it is impossible to learn from his description, or indeed any other that we have, what was due therein to S. Ursus and what to his successors. One of the most splendid ornaments the church possessed would seem to have been a ciborium of silver, borne by columns which stood over the high altar also of silver. This is said by Agnellus to have been placed there by the bishop S. Victor, who seems to have ruled in Ravenna from about 537 to 544. It is said to have cost, with the consent of Justinian, the whole revenue of Italy for a year and to have weighed some one hundred and twenty pounds. The whole stood in the midst of a circular choir of marble, itself covered with silver it might seem, if we may believe a chronicler of Vicenza of the fifteenth century, quoted by Zirardini,[2] who says: "In the great church of Ravenna all the choir, the altar, and the great tabernacle over the altar are of silver." Before the altar was the *Schola Cantorum*.

Agnellus tells us further in his life of S. Felix (*c.* 693) that that bishop built a *Salutatorium* (? Sacristy), "whence the bishop and his assistants proceeded at the Introit of the Mass into the presence of the people." But the Epigram which Agnellus quotes from this building would seem to suggest

[1] Agnellus gives the names of the mosaicists: Euserius or Cuserius, Paulus, Agatho, Satius, and Stephanus.

[2] Zirardini, *De Antiquis Sacris Ravennæ Ædificiis.*

that the *salutatorium* was rather then rebuilt than added for the first time to the church.

The magnificent basilica, one of the most splendid in Italy, was sacked by the French in April 1512, but, as Dr. Corrado Ricci says, it was not they who destroyed the church itself, but the *accademici* of the eighteenth century, who, instead of conserving the glorious building, then some thirteen hundred years old, began in 1733 to pull it down, to break up the beautiful capitals and columns of precious marbles, and to make out of the fragments the pavement of the new church we still see, begun in 1734 by Gian Francesco Buonamici da Rimini. Only the apse with its beautiful great mosaic remained for a few years till at last it too was destroyed.

Thus the church we have in place of the old Basilica Ursiana is a building of the eighteenth century, and all that we care for in it is the fragments that are to be found there of its glorious predecessor.

These are few in number and of little account. Supporting the central arch of the portico are two marble columns which belonged to the old basilica, and by the main door are two others of granite which came perhaps from the old nave.

Entering the church we find ourselves in a cruciform building consisting of three naves, divided by twenty-four columns of marble, transept, and apse, with a dome over the crossing. In the second chapel on the right is an ancient marble sarcophagus said to be that of S. Exuperantius, bishop of Ravenna about 470. The magnificent tomb carved in high relief did not, however, belong to the old cathedral, but was brought here when the church of S. Agnese was destroyed. In the south transept is the chapel of the Madonna del Sudore, where on either side are two other sarcophagi of marble adorned with figures and symbols. That on the right is said to be the tomb of S. Barbatianus, confessor of Galla Placidia, and was originally in the church of S. Lorenzo in Cæsarea, whence it was brought to the cathedral in the thir-

teenth century by the archbishop Bonifazio de' Fieschi, whom Dante found in Purgatory among the gluttons:

" Bonifazio
che pasturò col rocco molte genti. . ."

He brought the sarcophagus to the cathedral for his own tomb and there I suppose he was buried. The sarcophagus upon the left was likewise used in 1321 as a tomb for himself by the archbishop, Rainaldo Concoreggio. This, too, is sculptured with a bas-relief of Christ, a nimbus round His head, a book in His hand, seated on a throne set on a rock, out of which four rivers flow. With outstretched hand He gives a crown to S. Paul, while S. Peter bearing a cross holds a crown, just received, in his hand. The sculpture on the sarcophagus of S. Barbatianus is ruder.

The high altar is of course modern, but within it is an ancient marble sarcophagus of the sixth century, in which it is said the dust of nine bishops of about that time lies.

But one noble thing remains here among all the modern trash to remind us of all we have lost: the glorious processional cross of silver called of S. Agnello. Yet even this, noble as it is, does not come to us from Roman or Byzantine times it seems, but is rather a work of the eleventh century.

In the midst of this great cross, upon one side, is the Blessed Virgin praying, and upon the other Christ rising from the tomb. Upon the arms of the cross, and the uprights, are forty medallions of saints, of which three would seem to be archbishops. I say this beautiful and precious thing comes to us from the eleventh century; but it has been very much restored at various times and is now largely a work of the sixteenth century. Dr. Ricci tells us that on the side where we see the Madonna only the five medallions on the lower upright and the two last of the upper are original ; while upon that of the Risen Christ, only the five medallions on the lower upright are untouched, all the rest is restoration.

Beneath the eighteenth-century apse of the cathedral is the

ancient crypt, no longer to be seen; it does not, according to Dr. Ricci, date earlier than the ninth century nor do any of the other crypts in the city.

In the left aisle a few fragments from the old church remain recognisable. They are the marble slabs of an *ambo* erected by S. Agnellus, archbishop of Ravenna in the middle of the sixth century. There we read: *Servus Christi Agnellus Episcopus hunc pyrgum fecit.* Among these are some earlier panels of the fifth century. In the treasury, again, we find two other panels from the *ambo* of S. Agnellus, and a strange calendar carved upon a slab of marble to enable one to find the feast of Easter in any year from 532 to 626; this is certainly of the sixth century.

A certain number of Mediæval and Renaissance things are also to be seen in the church. Here in the treasury we have a cross of silver gilt, with reliefs of the Crucifixion, God the Father, the Blessed Virgin, S. John Baptist, and S. Mary Magdalen, dating from the middle of the fourteenth century (1366). Over the entrance to the sacristy is a fresco by Guido Reni of Elijah the prophet fed by an angel. Within, is a good picture by Marco Palmezzano: a Pietà with S. John Baptist; while the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament is decorated by him and his pupils.

It is obvious, then, that very little remains to us of the original Basilica Ursiana; nor can we reckon among that little the beautiful round and isolated campanile. This is not older than the ninth century, and has been much tampered with, especially in the sixteenth century, after an earthquake, and in the seventeenth century after both earthquake and fire. Indeed, the upper storey dates entirely from 1658.

As it is with the cathedral, so it is with the *Arcivescovado.* Of the old palace of the Bishops of Ravenna only a few walls, a tower, and a wonderful little chapel remain. What we see now is work of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries after a restoration at the end of the nineteenth. The old vast palace which has been destroyed was the work

of many archbishops, achieved during many centuries. It consisted of a series of buildings grouped about the palace which the archbishop S. Peter Chrysologus built in the fifth century, and its most magnificent part was due to S. Maximian, archbishop of Ravenna in the time of Justinian. All their work, which we would so gladly see, is gone except the little chapel of S. Peter Chrysologus, which he built and signed in one of the arches in the fifth century.[1]

Of this great man Agnellus records: "He was beautiful in appearance, lovely in aspect; before him there was no bishop like him in wisdom, nor any other after him." He was a native of Imola, then called Forum Cornelii, and was ordained deacon by the bishop of that city, one Cornelius, of whom he always speaks with affection and gratitude. When the bishop of Ravenna died, it is said the clergy of the cathedral, then just built or building, with the people, chose a successor, and besought the bishop of Imola to go to Rome to obtain the confirmation of the pope. Cornelius took with him his deacon Peter, and the pope, who had been commanded so to do by the Prince of the Apostles in a dream, refused to ratify the election already made, but proposed Peter the deacon as the bishop chosen by S. Peter himself. Peter was there and then consecrated bishop, was conducted to Ravenna, and received with acclamation. He is said to have found a certain amount of paganism still remaining in his diocese, and to have completely extirpated it. He often preached before the Augusta Galla Placidia and her son Valentinian III., and he was perhaps the first archbishop of the see, Ravenna till his time having been suffragan to Milan. He seems to have died about 450 in Imola. Among his many buildings, which included the monastery of S. Andrea at Classis, is the

[1] According to Rasponi the chapel was dedicated originally to S. Andrea and is to be identified with the Monasterum di S. Andrea, which was not built by S. Peter Chrysologus (429-*c.* 449), but by Peter II. (494-*c.* 519). Cf. Rasponi, *Note Marginali al Liber Pontificalis di Agnello Ravennate* (Atti e Memorie della R. Dep. di Stor. Pat. per la Romagna, iii. 27), Bologna, 1909-1910.

little chapel now dedicated in his honour in the *Arcivescovado* of Ravenna. It is perhaps the only one of his works which remains. The little square chamber, out of which the sanctuary opens, is upheld by four arches, which are covered, as is the vaulting, with most precious mosaics, still of the fifth century, though they have been and are still being much restored. On the angles of the vaulting, on a gold ground, we see four glorious white angels holding aloft in their upraised hands the symbol of Our Lord. Between them are the mighty signs of the Four Evangelists, the angel, the lion, the ox, and the eagle. In the key, as it were, of the arches east and west is a medallion of Our Lord, and three by three under the arch on either side the eleven Apostles and S. Paul, who takes the place of Judas instead of Matthias. In the key of the arches north and south is a medallion of the symbol of Christ, and three by three under the arch on either side six saints, the men to the right SS. Damian, Fabian, Sebastian, Chrysanthus, Chrysologus, and Cassianus; the women to the left SS. Cecilia, Eugenia, Eufemia, Felicitas, Perpetua, and Daria. Here the SS. Fabian, Sebastian, and Damian, Dr. Ricci tells us, are altogether restorations. For the rest, these mosaics have suffered much, both from restoration, properly so called, and from painting.

The pavement is old and beautiful, as I think are the walls, but the frescoes, once by Luca Longhi, are most unworthy and out of place. The recess which now contains the altar might seem not to have made a part of the original chapel or oratory; it appears it was only in the eighteenth century that the two were thrown into one. At that time the mosaics of the Blessed Virgin and of S. Apollinaris and S. Vitalis were brought here from the old cathedral.

Just outside this wonderful little chapel in the *Arcivescovado* there is an apartment devoted to Roman and other remains found from time to time in Ravenna: a torso of a statue, a work of Roman antiquity, should be noted, as should certain fragments of a frieze, also an antique Roman work. Here,

too, is preserved the splendid cope of S. Giovanni Angeloptes who was archbishop from 477 to 494 [1] when he died.

In another apartment of the *Arcivescovado* is preserved a relic of another great archbishop of Ravenna: the ivory throne of S. Maximianus. This is a magnificent work of the early part of the sixth century, and is one of the most splendid works known to us of its kind. It was made for the cathedral of Ravenna, but in or about the year 1001 it was carried off by the Venetians and given by doge Pietro Orseolo II. to the emperor Otto III., who left it to the church of Ravenna on his death. It is entirely formed of ivory leaves, most of them carved sumptuously in relief. In front we see the monogram of *Maximianus Episcopus* and under it are carvings of S. John Baptist between the Four Evangelists; all these between elaborately carved decorative panels. About the throne to right and left is the story of Joseph in ten panels, and upon the back in the seven panels that remain [2] the miracles of Our Lord. Altogether it is a work of the most lovely kind, and certainly Byzantine.

We shall come upon S. Maximianus again in S. Vitale, where something must be said of him. He lies, as has already been noted, in one of the great sarcophagi in the second chapel on the right in the cathedral.

From the *Arcivescovado* we pass to what is now the most remarkable building of the group—the Baptistery.

Dr. Ricci tells us that it was originally one of the halls of the baths that were near the present cathedral. But it was converted into a baptistery and ornamented with mosaics by the archbishop Neon of Ravenna (*c.* 449-459) as its inscriptions tell us and is signed with his monogram. The original floor is three metres below that we see, and a second floor about a metre and a half above the original floor has

[1] Cf. A. Testi Rasponi, *op. cit. supra.*

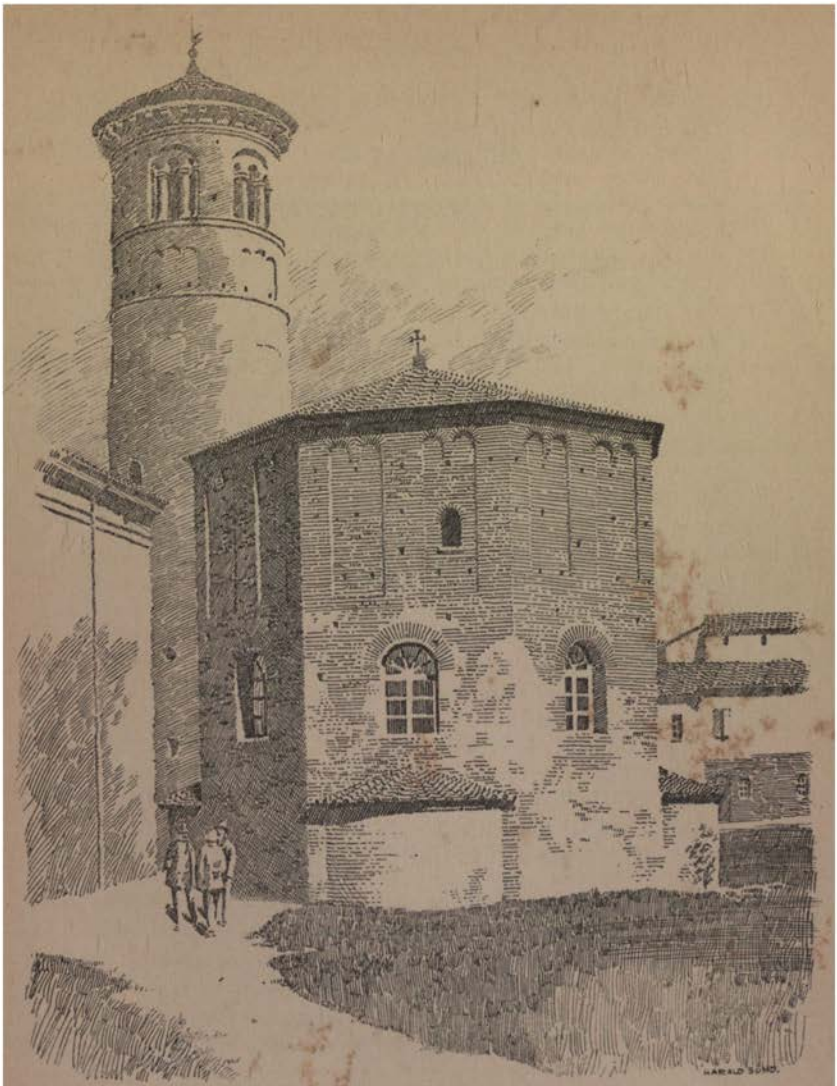
[2] Four of those missing, Dr. Ricci tells us, have of late years been discovered, one in the Naples Museum (1893), one in the collection of Count Stroganoff (1903), one at Pesaro (1894), and another in the Archæological Museum at Milan (1905).

been discovered; this it would seem is that made by Neon, while a third remains about half a metre under the pavement we use, and upon this are set the eight columns, with their capitals, two of them Byzantine and the rest Roman, which uphold the arches of the upper arcade upon which is set the great drum of the dome. The plan is a simple octagon, bare brick without, covered with a " tent " roof of amphoræ under the tiles; but within, everywhere encrusted with glorious marbles and mosaics.

It is to the mosaic of the cupola that we instinctively turn first, for it is, perhaps, the finest left to us in Ravenna. It is divided into three parts. In the midst is the Baptism of Our Lord on a gold ground. Christ stands up to His waist in the clear waters of the Jordan, the god of which river waits upon Him. S. John high up on the bank, his staff, topped with a cross, in his hand, pours the water from a shell upon Our Lord's head while the Dove, an almost heraldic figure, is seen above. About this circular mosaic is set a greater circle in which we see, upon a blue ground, the twelve Apostles in procession, each bearing his crown. Nothing left to us of that age is finer or more gravely splendid than these mosaics, they seem to be the highest expression of a great art which has known how to reject the brutal realism of an earlier time and to seize perfectly the secret of decoration. Nothing of the kind more masterly remains to us in Europe.

Beneath these two circles another is set in which are eight panels, each of three parts, where are represented eight temples, four of them with thrones signed with the Cross, and four of them with altars upon which the book of the Gospel is open.

The whole cupola is borne by the upper arcade, where we see sixteen figures of the Prophets in stucco. The upper arcade is in its turn borne by the lower, which is everywhere encrusted with mosaics, restorations of our own time. The walls are panelled with various marbles. In the midst of the building is a huge octagonal font with its *ambo*, and in one of the



THE BAPTISTERY AND CAMPANILE OF THE CATHEDRAL

wall niches is an ancient altar, and in another a vase of marble.

The effect of all this splendour is even to-day very lovely and glorious; what it might have been if it had been properly cared for instead of "restored" we can only guess. Unhappily the "restoration" has been very radical. Even in the central Baptism, the head and shoulders and right arm of the figure of the Saviour, the head and shoulders and right arm, the right leg and foot of the Baptist and the cross in his his left hand have been destroyed and the whole dimmed and even spoiled. Such as it is, however, where shall we find its equal or anything to compare with it?

From the cathedral group we now turn to the other churches which were built in the time of the old empire in Ravenna for the most part, in the days, that is, of Galla Placidia and her son Valentinian III.

Among these is the church of S. Agata (entrance Via Mazzini 46), which though entirely rebuilt, with its campanile, in the later part of the fifteenth century is since the "restoration" of 1893 interesting, if at all, because the church dates originally from the fifth century. It would seem indeed that it was founded in the time of the Augusta, and to this the walls of part of the nave bear witness, but it was continued later perhaps by the archbishop Exuperantius (*c.* 470) whose monogram appears upon the second column to the left in the nave, and finally completed or in part rebuilt in the sixth century. In the fifteenth century (1476-94), the church was largely rebuilt again, but its tribune with its great mosaic remained till 1688 when it fell. In the sixth century it would seem to have had an atrium or narthex. Its main interest for us to-day lies in the beauty of its columns of bigio antico, cipollino, porphyry, granite, and other marbles belonging to the original church, with their Roman and Byzantine capitals. Also to the right of the nave we see a curious *ambone* hollowed out of a fragment of a gigantic column of Greek marble. The

altar, too, is formed from an ancient sarcophagus which is said to hold the dust of the two archbishops, Sergius, with whom the pope had so much trouble, and Agnellus. According to Agnellus the chronicler there was a portrait of the archbishop S. John Angeloptes in the apse, but this like the great mosaic of the tribune is gone. It was here, however, that S. John got that strange surname of his—Angeloptes. He and his predecessor S. Peter Chrysologus with S. Maximian and Sergius were the great archbishops of this great see. We hear that the emperor Valentinian III., according to Agnellus —but we should place the bishopric of S. John Angeloptes 477-494—" was so much affected by the preaching of this holy man that he took off his imperial crown and humbly on his knees begged his blessing. . . . Not long after he gave him fourteen cities with their churches to be governed by him *Archieratica potestate*. And even to this day (ninth century), these fourteen cities with their bishops are subject to the church of Ravenna.[1] This bishop first received from the emperor a *Pallium* of white wool, just such as it is the custom for the pope to wear over the *Duplum;* and he and his successors have used such a vestment even to the present day."

This passage of Agnellus is important, but does not seem, on examination, to have any real bearing upon the question of the dependence of the See of Ravenna upon Rome. The Pallium was originally an imperial gift to the popes, probably in the fourth century. And the fact that it is the emperor and not the pope who bestowes it upon the archbishop of Ravenna in the fifth century, if it be true, can have no meaning at all in the question of papal supremacy.

Agnellus, whom I have quoted, goes on to tell us of that miracle which gave S. John, archbishop of Ravenna, his surname of Angeloptes or Angel-seer. " When the said John," he tells us, " was singing Mass in the Basilica of S. Agata and

[1] The Archbishop of Ravenna at the present day has seven suffragans, Bertinoro, Cervia, Cesena, Comacchio, Forlì, Rimini, Sarsina. It is hard to decide whether this man or Peter Chrysologus was the first archbishop of Ravenna.

had accomplished all things according to the pontifical rite, after the reading of the Gospel, after the Protestation (? the Credo), the catechumens to whom it was given to see saw marvellous things. For when that most blessed man began the Canon, and made the sign of the Cross over the sacrifice, suddenly an angel from heaven came and stood on the other side of the altar in sight of the bishop. And when after finishing the consecration he had received the Body of the Lord, the assisting deacon who wished to fulfil his ministry could not see the chalice which he had to hand to him. Suddenly he was moved aside by the angel who offered the holy chalice to the bishop in his place. Then all the priests and people began to shake and to tremble beholding the holy chalice self-moved, inclined to the bishop's mouth, and again lifted into the air, and laid upon the holy altar. A strange thrill passed through the waiting multitude. Some said: 'The deacon is unworthy;' others affirmed, 'Not so, but it is a heavenly visitation.' And so long did the angel stand by the holy man until all the solemnities of the Mass were ended."

Soon after this strange miracle S. John Angeloptes died and was buried in the basilica of S. Agata behind the altar in the place where he saw the angel standing.

Nothing seems to remain of his tomb or his grave; but the church is full of curious fragments, broken pillars, bits of mosaic, ancient marble panels, beautifully carved, and more than one old sarcophagus. Somewhere there no doubt the dust of S. John Angeloptes awaits the resurrection.

From S. Agata we pass to S. Francesco. This church was founded by S. Peter Chrysologus (429-*c.* 449) and was completed by S. Peter Chrysologus' successor, the archbishop S. Neon (*c.* 459). Its first title would seem to have been that of S. Peter Major; we hear, too, that it was called SS. Peter and Paul, and Agnellus in his life of S. Neon calls the church Basilica Apostolorum. The region of the city in which it stands would seem to have borne also the name *Regio Aposto-*

lorum, though whether it got the name from the church or the church from it is impossible to decide.[1]

Unhappily the church has been entirely rebuilt in the eighteenth century, and our interest in it is confined for the most part to the tower, the crypt, the twenty-two columns of Greek marble which uphold the nave, two of which are signed 'P. E.' and four others 'E. V. G.,' and the tombs. The tall square tower dates, perhaps, from the tenth century, the crypt from the ninth, but the columns are of the fifth century. Perhaps the oldest thing in the church is the sarcophagus on the right of the main door which has on its front Pagan sculptures and on its sides Christian. Close to the holy water stoup is a very lovely sarcophagus of the fourth century with reliefs of Our Lord and eight Apostles. The ribs of the cover have as finials the heads of lions; altogether this is a very splendid and noble tomb. In the last chapel upon the right we find the great sarcophagus, still used as an altar, of S. Liberius, bishop of Ravenna (*c.* 375), "a great man, a never-failing fountain of charity; who brought much honour to the church," according to Agnellus. The sarcophagus dates from the end of the fourth century and is sculptured in high relief.

I shall return to S. Francesco when I consider Mediæval Ravenna.[2] At present I would direct the reader's attention to S. Giovanni Evangelista.

This church was originally founded by Galla Placidia herself, in fulfilment of a vow made by her to S. John Evangelist, when, on her way from Constantinople to Ravenna, she was in danger of shipwreck.[3] Agnellus tells us that of old the church bore an inscription to this effect, and he gives it to us: *Sancto ac Beatissimo Apostolo Johanni Evangelistæ Galla Placidia Augusta cum filio suo Placidio Valentiniano Augusto et filia sua Justa Grata Honoria Augusta, Liberationis*

[1] The Franciscans conventuals would seem to have possessed the church from 1261 to 1810.

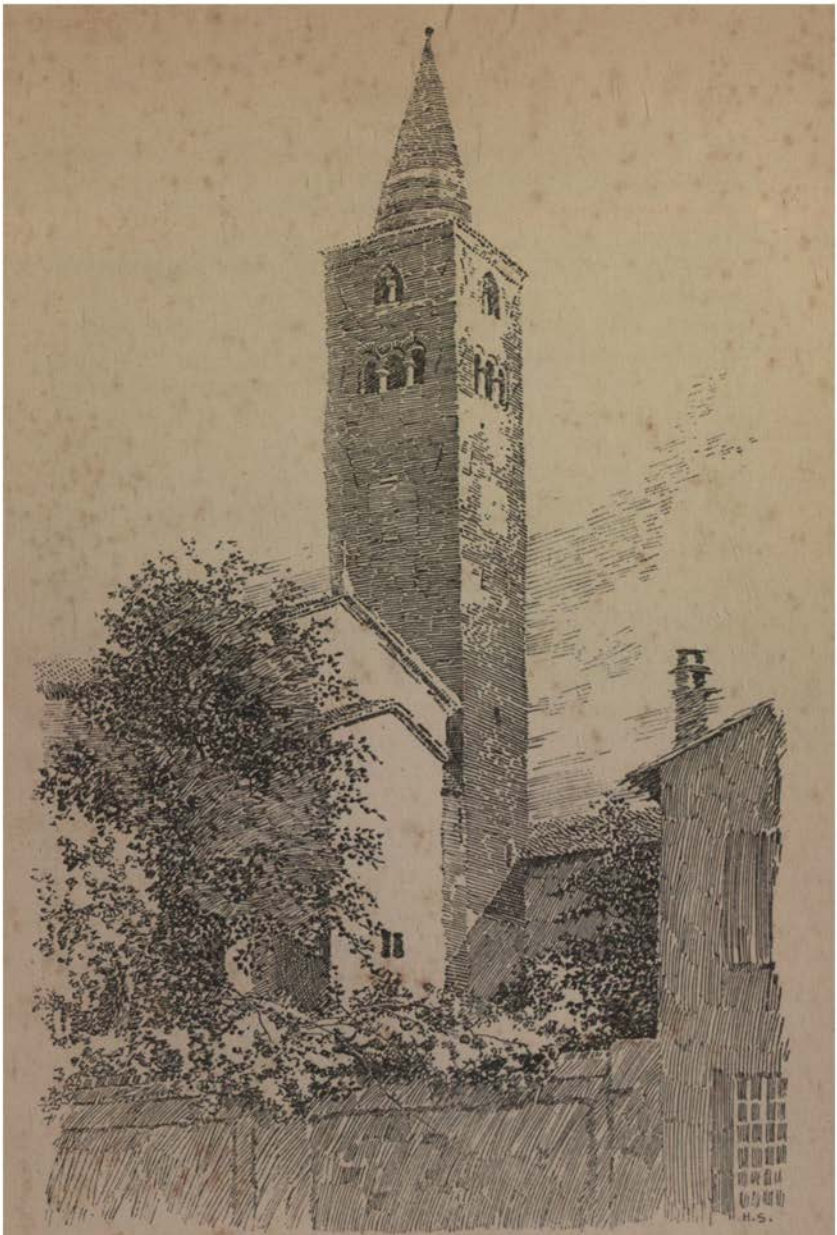
[2] See *infra*, p. 245 *et seq.*

[3] See *supra*, p. 41.

periculum maris votum solvientes. The mosaic of the apse of old represented the incident. Unhappily the church was almost entirely rebuilt in 1747, only the tower of the eleventh century and the portico of the fourteenth being left as they had been. The beautiful fourteenth-century door, however, bears above it a relief of that time in which we see Our Lord, S. John Evangelist, Valentinian III., Galla Placidia with her soldiers and her confessor, S. Barbatian, with priests. Below this on either side of the arch of the doorway is a representation of the Annunciation and within the arch itself a relief which recounts the miracle which attended the consecration of the church. For the church of S. Giovanni Evangelista was not only founded in recompense for a miracle, but a miracle attended its consecration. It seems that when the church was to be consecrated no relic of S. John Evangelist was to be had. Therefore the Augusta and her confessor gave themselves a whole night to prayer, and suddenly there appeared to them S. John himself, vested like a bishop with a thurible in his hand, with which he incensed the church. Then when he came to the altar to incense it, and they would have venerated him, he suddenly vanished, only leaving in the hand of the Augusta one of his shoes. This legend, which is represented in relief in the fourteenth-century doorway of S. Giovanni Evangelista, is also the subject of a picture by Rondinelli of Ravenna in the Brera at Milan.

The church has, as I have said, been ruined by the rebuilding of 1747; but there still remain the twenty-four columns of bigio antico with their Roman capitals, which upheld the old basilica, and in the crypt is the ancient high altar of the fifth century. Something, too, of the old church would seem to remain in the much repaired walls of the apse without.

The frescoes by Giotto, sadly repainted, in the fourth chapel on the left, must be noted. They represent the four Evangelists with their symbols over them, and the four Latin fathers of the Church, S. Jerome, S. Ambrose, S. Austin, and



The Campanile of S. Giovanni Evangelista

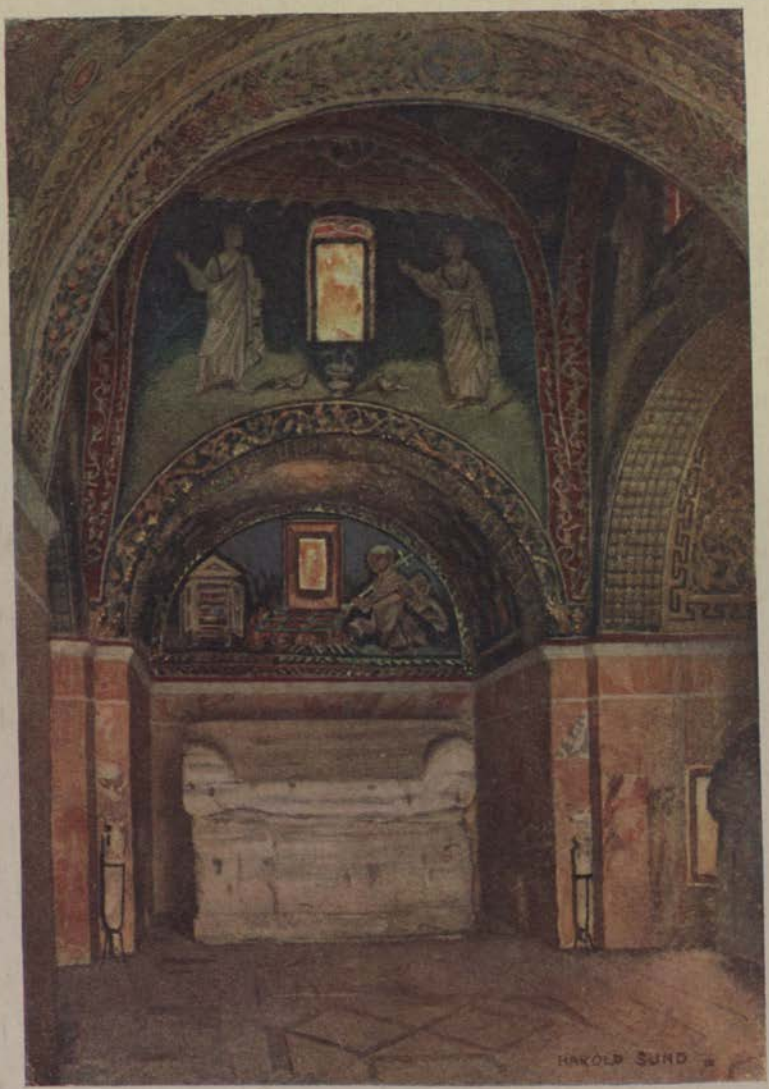
S. Gregory. Certain fragments of a thirteenth-century mosaic pavement are to be seen in the chapel of S. Bartholomew, which is itself perhaps the oldest part of the church.

We turn now to the church of S. Giovanni Battista which was founded by a certain Baduarius, according to Agnellus, and consecrated by S. Peter Chrysologus. It is possible that Baduarius was the mere builder, and that he built by order of Galla Placidia. Nothing, however, is left of the old church, which was entirely rebuilt in 1683, except the apse as it is seen from the outside, the round campanile in its first story and the beautiful columns sixteen in number, four of bigio antico, two of pavonazzetto, one of cipollino, and the rest of greco venato, according to Dr. Ricci.

There remains to be considered what is, when all is said, I suppose the noblest monument of the fifth century left to us in Italy or in Europe—the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia.

Agnellus tells us that the Augusta built close to her palace a great church in the shape of a Latin cross. This she dedicated in honour of the Holy Cross which it will be remembered her predecessor S. Helena had discovered in Jerusalem. Of this church, though it has long since disappeared—the "western" part of it having been destroyed in 1602 and what remained restored out of all recognition in 1716—we know a good deal. According to Agnellus it was covered with most precious stones (? marbles) and apparently with mosaics and was full of splendid ornaments. It had, too, a great narthex, and at the end of this Galla Placidia presently built a cruciform oratory for her own mausoleum, where she was to lie between her brother Honorius and her son Valentinian.

The Mausoleum of Galla Placidia is the oldest complete building left to us in Ravenna, for it dates from well within the first half of the fifth century, whereas the baptistery, altered and transformed as it was by S. Neon, is as we see it a work



THE MAUSOLEUM OF GALLA PLACIDIA.

of the first years of the second half of that century. Simple as it is, without, a cruciform building of plain brick, within it is so sumptuously and splendidly adorned that not an inch anywhere remains that is not encrusted with mosaic or precious marbles. These mosaics were, before their radical "restoration," perhaps finer and more classical than those of the baptistery. It might seem, indeed, that they were perhaps the finest and subtlest work done in the Roman realistic tradition, nor was there perhaps anywhere to be found so noble a representation of the Good Shepherd as that which adorned this great monument. It is, however, impossible to speak with any confidence of what we see there now, for all has been restored again and again, and is now little better than a *rifacimento* of our own time, a copy, faithful perhaps, but still a copy, of the work of the fifth century.

Nevertheless, the impression of the whole is very splendid and solemn. The roofs and dome are covered with mosaics of a wonderful and indescribable night blue, powdered with stars. In the cupola is a cross and at the four angles are set the symbols of the four Evangelists, glorious heraldic figures.

Above the door we see Christ the Good Shepherd, youthful, classic in form and repose, very noble and Roman, seated on a rock in a broken hilly landscape, a cross in His left hand, caressing His sheep with His right. This figure even after "restoration" gives us more than a glimpse of what it once was. Nowhere had Christian art produced so majestic a representation of its Lord; nor had the subject of the Good Shepherd been anywhere more splendidly treated than here.

Over the great sarcophagus, opposite the entrance, we see a very different scene. Here is no longer a youthful Christ, with the hair and the noble aspect of Apollo, but a bearded and majestic figure in the fullness of manhood, His eyes full of anger, His draperies flying about Him, moving swiftly, the cross on His shoulders, in His left hand an heretical, probably Arian, book which he is about to cast into the furnace in the midst. Upon the extreme left is

a case or cupboard in which we see the books of the four Gospels. In the other lunettes we see very gorgeous decorative work of arabesques and stags at a fountain and two doves drinking from a vase. Above in the spandrils of the arches are figures of apostles or saints. Nothing in the world is more solemnly gorgeous in effect than this beautiful rich interior. The pavement is composed of fragments of the same precious marbles as those which line the lower parts of the walls.

Under the mosaic of the burning of the heretical books we see the mighty sarcophagus of plain Greek marble which once held the body of the Augusta. This, of old, was richly adorned with carved marbles and perhaps with silver or mosaic; and we know that in the fourteenth century certainly it was possible to see within the figure of a woman richly dressed seated in a chair of cedar and this was believed to be the mummy of the Augusta Galla Placidia. However, we hear nothing of it before the fourteenth century, and Dr. Ricci suggests that it may have been an imposture of about that time. It is possible, but perhaps unlikely, for the Augusta was not a saint, and what reason could men have in the thirteenth century, when the very meaning of the empire was about to be forgotten, for such an imposture? However this may be, the figure remained there seated in its chair during the fourteenth, fifteenth, and the greater part of the sixteenth centuries. And indeed, it might have been there still but that in 1577 some children, curious about it and anxious to see a thing so wonderful, thrust a lighted taper into the tomb through one of the holes in the marble, when mummy, vestments, chair and all were consumed, and in a moment nothing remained but a handful of dust.

The sarcophagi under the arches on either side, according to various authorities, hold the dust of the emperor Honorius, the brother of the Augusta, and of Constantius her husband, or of the emperor Valentinian III. her son. It is impossible to decide at this late day exactly who does and who does not lie in these great Christian tombs.

The Mausoleum of the Augusta was long known, though not from its origin, as the sanctuary of SS. Nazaro e Celso. When it was so dedicated I am ignorant, but it was not in the time of the Augusta. Then, in the fifteenth century, when so much was remembered and so much more was forgotten, it bore the title of SS. Gervasio e Protasio, and this name remained to it till the seventeenth century, when the old title was revived. To-day although it retains its name of SS. Nazaro and Celso, it is more rightly and universally known as the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia.

XII

THE ARIAN CHURCHES OF THE SIXTH CENTURY

THE PALACE OF THEODORIC, S. APOLLINARE NUOVO, S. SPIRITO, S. MARIA IN COSMEDIN, THE MAUSOLEUM OF THEODORIC

It was, as we have seen, upon March 5, 493, that Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, entered Ravenna as the representative of the emperor at Constantinople. One of his first acts seems to have been the erection of a palace designed for his habitation and that of his successors. Why this should have been so we do not know. It might seem more reasonable to find the Gothic king taking possession of the imperial palace, close to which the Augusta Galla Placidia had erected the church of S. Croce and her tomb. Perhaps this had been destroyed in the revolution or series of revolutions in which the empire in the West had fallen, perhaps it had been ruined in the Gothic siege which endured for some three years. Whatever had befallen it, it was not occupied, restored, or rebuilt by Theodoric. He chose a situation upon the other side of the city and there he built a new palace and beside it a great Arian church, for both he and his Goths were of that sect. We call the church to-day S. Apollinare Nuovo.

The palace, of which nothing actually remains to us, though certain additions made to it during the exarchate are still standing, was, according to the various chroniclers whose

works remain to us, surrounded by porticoes, such as Theodoric built in many places, and was carved with precious marbles and mosaics. It was of considerable size, set in the midst of a park or gardens. Something of what it was we may gather from the mosaics of S. Apollinare Nuovo in which it is conventionally represented. It came to owe much to Amalasuntha who lived there during her brief reign, and more to the exarchs who made it their official residence.

In 751 when Ravenna fell into the hands of the Lombards Aistulf established himself there, but it might seem that the place had suffered grievously in the wars, and it was probably little more than a mighty ruin when, in 784, Charlemagne obtained permission from the pope to strip it of its marbles and its ornaments and to carry them off to Aix-la-Chapelle. Among these was an equestrian statue in gilded bronze, according to Agnellus a portrait of the great Gothic king, but as Dr Ricci suggests a statue of the Emperor Zeno. This too in the time of Leo III. Charlemagne carried away. According to the same authority the back of the palace was not then very far from the sea, and this was so even in 1098. Nothing I think can give us a better idea of the change that has come over the *contado* of Ravenna than an examination of its situation to-day, more than four miles from the sea coast.

The only memorial we have left to us *in situ* of that palace of the Gothic king is a half-ruined building, really a mere façade with round-arched blind arcades and a central niche in the upper story, a colonnade in two stories, and the bases of two round towers with a vast débris of ruined foundations, walls, and brickwork, scarcely anything of which, in so far as it may be said to be still standing, would seem to have been a part of the palace Theodoric built. Indeed the ruined façade would seem to belong to a guard house built in the time of the exarchs in the seventh or eighth century. If we seek then for some memory of Theodoric in this place we shall be disappointed.

Far otherwise is it with the great church, the noblest in

Ravenna, of S. Apollinare Nuovo. This was built about the same time as the palace, in the first twenty years of the sixth century, as the Arian cathedral by the Gothic king. It was the chief temple in Ravenna of that heresy, and it remained in Arian hands till with the re-establishment of the imperial power in Italy it was consecrated, in 560, for Catholic use by the archbishop S. Agnellus. It consists of a basilica divided into three naves by twenty-four columns of Greek marble with Romano-Byzantine capitals. Of old it had an atrium, but this was removed in the sixteenth century, as was the ancient apse in the eighteenth. The original apse, however, was ruined in an earthquake, as Agnellus tells in his life of S. Agnellus, in the sixth century, and of the atrium only a single column remains *in situ* before the church. The campanile, a noble great round tower, dates from the ninth century for the most part, its base is, however, new. The portico before the church is a work of the sixteenth century, as is the façade, which nevertheless contains certain ancient marbles, among which are two inscribed stones, one of the fourth century and the other of the eleventh.

When Theodoric built this great and glorious church he dedicated it to Jesus Christ. It seems to have been dedicated in honour of S. Martin in 560 by the archbishop S. Agnellus who consecrated it for Catholic worship, and finally in the middle of the ninth century to have been given the title of S. Apollinare by the archbishop John, who asserted that he had brought hither the relics of the first archbishop of the see from S. Apollinare in Classe when that church was threatened by the Saracens.

The oldest name by which the church was generally known, however, is that of *Cœlum Aureum*. Agnellus in his life of the archbishop S. Agnellus says, speaking of the Catholic consecration of the church, "Then the most blessed Agnellus the bishop reconciled within this city the church of S. Martin Confessor, which Theodoric the king founded, and which was called *Cœlum Aureum*. . . ." And he goes on to say that it was

found from an inscription that "King Theodoric made this church from its foundations in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ."[1] It got the name of *Cœlum Aureum* perhaps from its glorious roof of gold. This, however, was destroyed in 1611.

The church has indeed suffered very much in the course of the fourteen hundred years of its existence, and yet in many ways it is the best preserved church in Ravenna. In the sixteenth century, for instance, it was fast sinking into ruin; the floor of the church and the bases of the columns were then more than a metre and a half beneath the level of the soil, and it was decided that something must be done if the building was to be saved. In 1514 this work was undertaken; the columns were raised and the arches cut and thus the church and its great mosaics were preserved. It is, however, still sinking; the new pavement of the sixteenth century has disappeared, and that of 1873 which was brought from the suppressed church of S. Niccolò covers the bases of the columns.

If S. Apollinare Nuovo had been allowed to fall, nothing that we possess in the world would have compensated us for its loss. For not only have we here a beautiful interior very largely of the sixth century, but the great mosaics of the nave which cover the walls above the arcade under the windows are, I suppose, at once the largest and the most remarkable works of that time which ever existed. They are also of an extraordinary and exceptional beauty. They represent upon both sides, through the whole length of the nave, as it were two long processions of saints. Upon the Epistle side are the martyrs issuing out of the city of Ravenna to lay their crowns at the feet of Our Lord on His throne, guarded by four angels. Upon the Gospel side are the virgins headed by the three kings, who offer gifts to Our Lord in his Mother's arms enthroned between four angels. There is nothing in Christendom to compare with these mosaics. They are unique and, as

[1] Cf. also Agnellus, *Liber Pontificalis*, Vita Theodori, cap. ii.

I like to think, in their wonderful significance are the key to a mystery that has for long remained unsolved. For these long processions of saints, representing that great crowd of witnesses of which S. Paul speaks, stand there above the arcade and under the clerestory where in a Gothic church the triforium is set. But the triforium is the one inexplicable and seemingly useless feature of a Gothic building. It seems to us, in our ignorance of the mind of the Middle Age, of what it took for granted, to be there simply for the sake of beauty, to have no use at all. But what if this church in Ravenna, the work indeed of a very different school and time, but springing out of the same spiritual tradition, should hold the key? What if the triforium of a Gothic church should have been built as it were for a great crowd of witnesses—the invisible witnesses of the Everlasting Sacrifice, the sacrifice of Calvary, the sacrifice of the Mass? It is not only in the presence of the living, devout or half indifferent, that that great sacrifice is offered through the world, yesterday, to-day, and for ever, but be sure in the midst of the chivalry of heaven, a multitude that no man can number, none the less real because invisible, among whom one day we too are to be numbered. Not for the living only, but for the whole Church men offer that sacrifice *pro redemptione animarum suarum, pro spe salutis et incolumitatis suæ. Memento etiam Domine famulorum famularumque tuarum qui nos præcesserunt cum signo fidei et dormiunt in somno pacis.* . . . Here in S. Apollinare at any rate for ever they await the renewal of that moment.

Those marvellous figures that appear in ghostly procession upon the walls of S. Apollinare here in Ravenna are really indescribable, they must be seen if the lovely significance of their beauty is to be understood. What can one say of them?

Upon the Epistle side we see as it were a procession of twenty-five figures all in white with palms in the right hands and crowns in their left. They are the martyrs SS. Clement, Sixtus, Laurence, Cyprian, Paul, Vitalis, Gervasius, Protasius,

Hippolytus, Cornelius, Cassianus, John, Ursinus, Namor, Felix, Apollinaris, Demetrius, Polycarp, Vincent, Pancras, Chrysogonus, Protus, Jovenius, and Sabinus, and their names are written in a long line over them; each is aureoled, and each upon his white robe bears a letter the significance of which is hidden from us. This procession comes out of the city of Ravenna which is magnificently represented, occupying indeed a fifth of the whole length of the mosaic.

In the foreground is the palace of Theodoric, the whole façade of it, the triple arched peristyle in the midst flanked on either side by two triple arched loggias, each having a second story of five arches. In the spandrils of the arches are figures of Victories, and of old in the tympanum we might have seen Theodoric on horseback. Within, the arches are hung with curtains. On the extreme right is the great gate of the palace in the wall of the city, flanked on either side by towers. In the lunette over the gateway we see three small figures of Christ with the cross between two Apostles, and within the gate, I think, a great figure, seated. Over the façade of the palace we look into the city and see four churches, which Dr. Ricci suggests may be, on the right, this very church with its baptistery, now destroyed, together with the church of S. Teodoro (now S. Spirito) and the Arian baptistery: they are altogether Byzantine in type. Out of this city come the martyrs; there are twenty-five of them all in white, as I have said, and they are led by S. Martin Confessor, who bears of course no palm, is robed in purple, and bears his crown in both his hands. He leads the procession along a way strewn with flowers to the throne where Christ sits guarded by four angels.

Above this great scene, between the windows, above each of which there is an ornamental mosaic, we see sixteen figures of Prophets or perhaps Fathers. Over these are twenty-seven compartments each filled with a mosaic. Those over the heads of the prophets are, except in the case of him who stands, at each end, last but one, filled with a sort of recessed

throne in mosaic, over which in each case are set two doors. But the eleven compartments over the windows and the two over the two figures last but one at either end are filled with thirteen scenes from the New Testament, beginning on the left as follows: (1) The Last Supper, (2) The Agony in the Garden, (3) The Kiss of Judas, (4) Christ taken, (5) Christ before the High Priest, (6) Christ before Herod, (7) The Denial of Peter, (8) Judas trying to restore the money to the priests, (9) Christ before Pilate, (10) The Via Crucis, (11) The Maries at the Sepulchre, (12) The way to Emmaus, (13) The Incredulity of S. Thomas.

Turning now to the Gospel side of the church, we find a similar procession over the arcade, but of twenty-one virgin martyrs bearing palms and crowns richly dressed with precious ornaments and jewels. They bear the following names: SS. Pelagia, Agatha, Eulalia, Cecilia, Lucia, Crispina, Valeria, Vincentia, Agnes with her lamb, Perpetua, Felicitas, Justina, Anastasia, Daria, Paulina, Victoria, Anatolia, Christina, Savona, Eugenia. They issue out of the towered gate of the Castello of Classis, whose wall stretches before us to the great sea gate through which we look upon the port with three ships on the water, one of which is sailing in or out. Within the castello over the wall of it we see buildings of a distinctly Roman type.

The procession of virgins which issues forth from this castello is led by S. Eufemia, who does not bear a palm, but carries her crown in her two hands. Before her go the three Magi, Balthassar, Melchior, and Gaspar, bearing their gold, frankincense, and myrrh under the palms of the long way, guided by the star to where Madonna sits enthroned with her little Son between four angels.

Above between the windows, as on the Epistle side, are sixteen figures in mosaic of the Prophets or Fathers; and over them again, as before, are thirteen scenes from the life of Our Lord: (1) The Healing of the cripple at Capernaum, (2) The Herd of Swine, (3) The Healing of the paralytic who was

let down in a bed to Jesus, (4) The Parable of the sheep and the goats, (5) The Widow's mite, (6) The Pharisee and the Publican, (7) The Raising of Lazarus, (8) The Woman of Samaria at the well, (9) The Healing of the woman with an issue of blood, (10) The Healing of the two blind men, (11) The Miraculous draught of fishes, (12) The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes, (13) The Water turned into Wine.

And what are we to say of these marvellous things? This first of all, that for the most part they are not of the time of Theodoric, but rather of that S. Agnellus who consecrated the church for Catholic use. This is not to deny that there were always in the church mosaics occupying the place which these we see fill; on the contrary. But the processions of the martyrs and of the virgins with the three Magi are certainly Catholic works, and of the middle or end of the sixth century; they obviously took the place of certain mosaics perhaps full of Arian doctrines which then stood there. On the other hand, the castello of Classis, the Christ enthroned with angels, the Virgin enthroned with angels, the Prophets or Fathers, and the scenes of Our Lord's life and teaching, above them, are of Theodoric's time. The city of Ravenna I am perhaps alone in attributing to the later period. Dr. Ricci—and he is of course an almost infallible authority—attributes it to the time of Theodoric. It does not seem to me to be so. All this, however, must be understood to refer to such parts of these mosaics as have not suffered restoration, which, however, has not often been as drastic as that which has befallen the figures of the Magi; of which the upper parts are new, as are the figures of the two outer angels.

We have here then under our eyes the two schools of mosaics, that of Rome and that of Constantinople. It is easy to see that the Roman work, the original work that is, is more classical and realistic than the rich and glorious figures of the processions; but it is not decoratively so successful. Indeed I know of nothing anywhere that is more artistically, dramatically, and as it were liturgically satisfying

than these long processions on either side of S. Apollinare Nuovo.

Little else remains in the church worth notice except an ancient ambo under the arcade in the nave and the chapel of the Relics at the top of the left aisle. This was largely built of ancient fragments in the sixteenth century. We see there two beautiful alabaster columns with capitals of serpentine with two small columns of verde antico also with ancient capitals. The screen is Byzantine. The walls are ornamented with bas-reliefs and paintings, but above all these we see there a marvellous portrait in mosaic of the emperor Justinian as an old man, unhappily restored in 1863. The altar is ancient and above it is a marble coffer with Renaissance ornaments, upheld by four columns of porphyry, having two Byzantine and two Roman capitals. On the Epistle side of the altar here is a marble chair—a Roman thing.

From that splendid and well-preserved church we pass to that of the Spirito Santo. Unhappily this once glorious building has suffered as much as any church left to us in Ravenna, for it was almost entirely rebuilt in 1543 when the portico we see was added to it, and in 1627 was restored and adorned, as it was in 1854 and 1896. That it was founded and built by the Goths and reconciled later for Catholic use appears in Agnellus' life of the archbishop S. Agnellus, where we read that of old the Arian Episcopio stood near by, together with a bath and a *monastero* of S. Apollinare. What the *monastero* may have been we do not know, but the bath was perhaps the Arian baptistery known as S. Maria in Cosmedin.

The church of the Spirito Santo was not in Arian times known under that dedication, but was called of S. Theodore. It owes the pleasing portico it now possesses, as I have said, to the sixteenth century, but that portico is itself largely constructed of old materials, being upheld by eight antique columns, of which six are of Greek marble. These originally supported the baldacchino over the high altar. Within, the church is divided into three naves by fourteen columns,

thirteen of which are of bigio antico, and the other, the last on the Epistle side towards the altar, of a rare and curious marble known as verde sanguigno. The capitals are of Theodoric's time, late Roman work.

Very little remains in the church that is of any interest to us. In the sacristy, however, we may see in the present lavabo some fragments of the ancient ciborio. And in the nave at the western end on the Gospel side is an ancient sarcophagus of Greek marble which was carved in the Renaissance and in the seventeenth century became the sepulchre of one of the Pasolini family. In the first chapel on this side of the church is the ancient *ambone* removed from the nave in the sixteenth century, and in the second are two columns of pavonazzetto marble.

Something better is to be had in the utterly desolate baptistery close by known as S. Maria in Cosmedin. This was originally, as we may think, the ancient bath of which Agnellus speaks, and it was converted into a baptistery by the Arians, and later consecrated for Catholic uses under the title of S. Maria in Cosmedin and used as an oratory. It is an octagonal building whose walls support a cupola which is covered with mosaics in circles like that of the original baptistery of the city. In the midst we see Christ almost a youth standing naked in Jordan immersed to his waist. Upon His left, S. John stands upon a rock, his staff in his left hand, while his right rests upon the head of Our Lord. Opposite to him sits enthroned the old god of Jordan, a reed in his hand, listening, perhaps, to the words of the Father: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Over Christ's head the Dove is displayed in the golden heaven.

About the central mosaic is set a band of palm leaves, while on the outer circle we see the twelve Apostles very much like the martyrs of S. Apollinare standing dressed in white, their crowns in their hands between palms. Only S. Peter and another, perhaps S. John or S. Paul, do not bear crowns, but

S. Peter his keys and the other a book. Between them is set a throne on which stands a jewelled cross.

It is exceedingly difficult to say when these mosaics were executed, for they have been so entirely restored that very little of the original work is left to us. They are certainly very early for work of the Catholic restoration; and yet they remind one strongly of the processions of S. Apollinare Nuovo. If as a whole the design of these mosaics is of the time of the archbishop S. Agnellus, it is curious that the subject of the Baptism should have been used for a church which by his act had ceased to be a baptistery. The most reasonable hypothesis would seem to be that the design and choice of subject is in the main due to the Arians; that the central disc remains late work of their time in so far as it is original at all. While the apostles may be in the main the work of the Catholic restoration.

Theodoric was, as these works serve to show, a great builder of churches in his capital. Not all of them have remained to our day. Dr. Ricci has thought that we see something of one of them in the Portico Antico of the Piazza Maggiore where there are eight columns of granite upon the left of the Palazzo del Comune with late Roman capitals, four of which have the monogram of the Gothic king. The church of S. Andrea,[1] according to Dr. Ricci, stood by the city wall, near where the Venetians in the fifteenth century built their Rocca, destroying the church to make room for it. Dr. Ricci suggests that when they began to construct the Portico of the Piazza they used, as indeed they more than any other people were wont to do, the material of the demolished church in their new building and among it these great columns with their Roman capitals and strange monograms.

But astonishing though these churches are which Theodoric built by the art and hands of the Italians during the generation of his rule in Ravenna, they would not impress us with

[1] S. Andrea was, according to Rasponi, *op. cit. ut supra*, the same as the chapel of the Arcivescovado called S. Pier Crisologo.

the strength and importance of his personality and government, as undoubtedly they do, if we had not in his mausoleum perhaps the most impressive late Roman building left to us practically intact in all Italy, a thing which, quite as much as the mightier tomb of Hadrian, assures us of the enormous vitality of Roman civilisation, its weight, endurance, and unfailing continuance through every sort of disaster and misgovernment.

This mighty monument is situated upon the north-east of the city, perhaps upon the old Roman road the Via Popilia. That it was built by Theodoric himself might seem certain. For though it has been said that it was erected by Amalasuntha the Anonymus Valesii tells us that Theodoric built it before he died. "While yet he lived he made a monument of squared stone, a work of marvellous greatness, covered with a single stone." It is perhaps of little consequence to whom we owe this mighty tomb, for it is absolutely, and in any case, Roman work, and might seem to have been modelled upon the far larger and more tremendous mausoleum of Hadrian.[1]

The mausoleum is built in two stories of block after block of hewn and squared stone. The lower of the two stories is decagonal and has in every side a vast archway or niche, one of which forms the gateway. Within we find a huge cruciform chamber lighted by six square openings. The upper story, now reached by two stairways, built with ancient materials in 1774, is circular, having about it eighteen blind arches and over it a vast circular roof hewn out of a single block of Istrian stone that weighs, it is said, two hundred tons. It may be that this upper story, smaller as it is than the lower, was of old surrounded by a colonnade, and it may be that the twelve projections upon the vast monolith of the roof

[1] Choisy points out that the mausoleum of Theodoric has stylistic affinities with Syrian work, and Strzygowski, who reminds us that several bishops of Ravenna were Syrians, thinks that Ravenna in much derived from Syria especially from Antioch.

once upheld statutes of the twelve Apostles. We do not know.[1]

Here in this mighty tomb, which is known in Ravenna as *La Rotonda*, abandoned now in an unkempt garden, Theodoric, who expected to found a line of kings who would one day lie beside him; as long as he lay there at all, lay there alone. Not for long, however, did he enjoy that solitude. Already, when Agnellus wrote his *Liber Pontificalis*, the tomb was empty. He tells us that the porphyry urn, which had served as sepulchre for the Gothic king, then stood at the door of the Benedictine monastery close by, and that it was empty. And it seemed to him, he says, that the body of the king had been thrown out of the mausoleum because a heretic and a barbarian, as we may suppose, was not worthy of it. At any rate the body of Theodoric was no longer in the mausoleum in the beginning of the ninth century, and it is certain that it had been ejected thence many years before. In the year 1854 a gang of navvies who were excavating a dock between the railway station and the Corsini Canal, some two hundred yards perhaps from the mausoleum, and on the site of an old cemetery, came upon a skeleton "armed with a golden cuirass, a sword by its side, and a golden helmet upon its head. In the hilt of the sword and in the helmet large jewels were blazing." Most of this booty they disposed of, but a few pieces were recovered and these are now in the Museo. It might seem that this can have been none other than the body of the great Gothic king. Indeed Dr. Ricci finds the ornament upon the armour to be similar to the decoration upon the cornice of the mausoleum. If this be so it puts the matter almost beyond doubt.

Theodoric was not allowed to rest in the mighty tomb that Latin genius had built for him; but for ages many, famous

[1] On the other hand, these projections are thought by many to have been used as rings for the ropes by which the roof was hauled up an inclined bank of earth into place. They each bear the name of an Apostle, and are similar to the small abutting arches round the dome of S. Sophia at Salonica.

and distinguished in their day, sought to lie under a monument so splendid. The place became a sort of pantheon. Long before then, however, it had been consecrated as a church, S. Maria della Rotonda, and a Benedictine monastery had been founded close by whose monks served it. To-day that monastery has utterly disappeared, and there are no signs of a church in the *Rotonda*. Only the mausoleum remains in a tangled garden, far from any road, empty and deserted.

XIII

THE BYZANTINE CHURCHES

S. VITALE AND S. APOLLINARE IN CLASSE

When Belisarius entered Ravenna in 540, he apparently found more than one new building begun but not finished; of these the chief was the church of S. Vitale. This magnificent octagonal building with its narthex and atrium had, according to Agnellus, been founded by the Archbishop S. Ecclesius, that is to say, between 521 and 534. It was apparently finished and decorated later by Julius Argentarius, and was consecrated by the archbishop S. Maximianus in 547. In plan it resembles very closely the church of SS. Sergius and Bacchus in Constantinople built by Justinian about 527. As we know both Justinian and Theodora, his empress, contributed largely to the perfecting of S. Vitale, which remains certainly his most glorious monument in the West.

The plan of the church, as I have said, is octagonal, surmounted by a dome octagonal without but circular within. From one of these eight sides the sanctuary is thrust out, flanked on either side by a circular chapel with a rectangular presbytery. Standing obliquely across one of the two angles of the octagon, directly opposite this sanctuary, stretched the narthex flanked by circular towers. The great octagon is divided into two stories, each of which has three windows upon each of the eight sides, the octagonal dome being lighted by eight single windows.

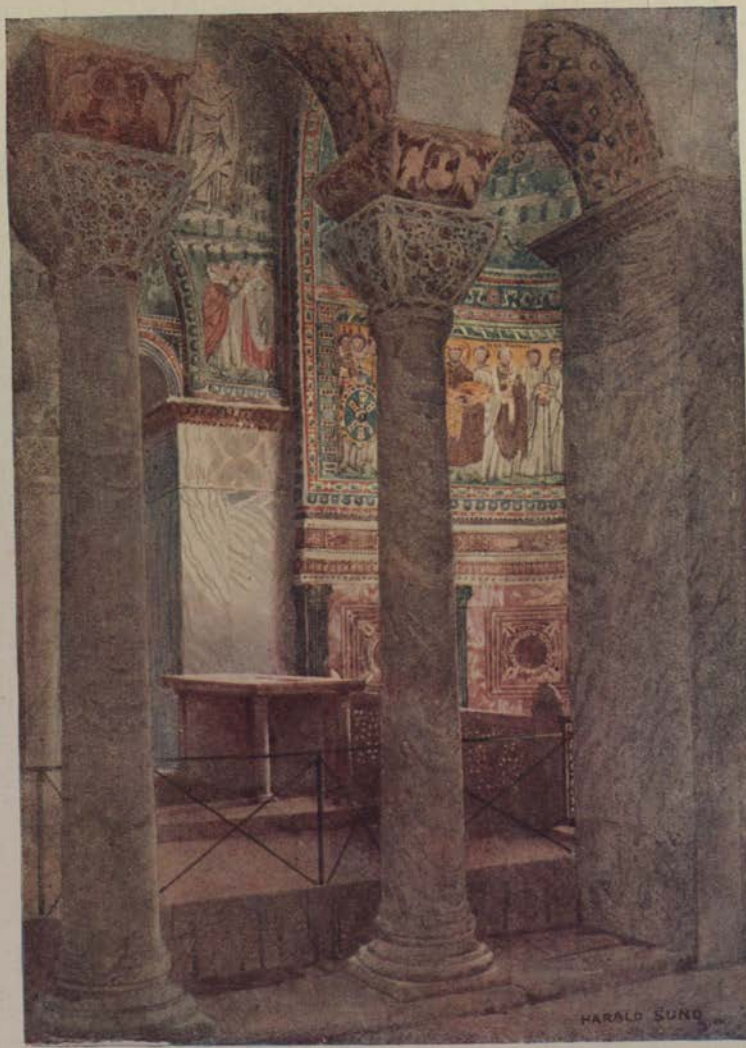
S. Vitale

Within the great octagon formed by the walls is a smaller octagon formed by an arcade of mighty piers which upholds the cupola. This arcade contains a double loggia which thus runs round the whole church with the exception of the presbytery, where it ends in lofty tribunes. It is upheld between the piers by columns of precious marble having capitals of the most marvellous beauty.

The space within this inner octagon is covered with a pavement laid down in the sixteenth century, consisting of all sorts of fragments of mosaics and marbles which that century destroyed. The upper loggia was of old the *gyneceo*, the place of the women. Nothing I think left to us in the world is more sumptuous and gorgeous than this interior. Everywhere are glittering mosaics, precious slabs of marble, priceless columns of beautiful marble. And where the mosaics have been destroyed or left unfinished, as in the cupola and the body of the church, baroque artists have filled the place with their paintings, paintings which in their own style are matchless and which it is now foolishly proposed should be destroyed.[1]

In our examination of the church we turn first to the presbytery, which is entirely encrusted with most precious marbles and mosaics. In the midst of it stands the altar consisting of slabs of semi-transparent alabaster, within which of old lights were set. The marvellously lovely piece which serves for the altar stone itself is supported by four columns, and that piece which serves for frontal is carved with a great cross between two sheep. This altar had long disappeared, but piece by piece it was recovered; the beautiful altar stone itself was found behind an altar in a chapel now destroyed in this church, and was re-erected as we see it in 1899.

[1] We know nothing of any mosaics other than those in the presbytery and the tribunes; it may be that the church was covered with mosaic or was painted by the Byzantine artists, and this as well where the marble slabs now cover the piers as elsewhere. If so it must have been glorious indeed. Nothing that we can do can restore this work to us, and we achieve nothing but destruction by destroying the work that is now there.



S. VITALE: THE PRESBYTERY.

(Exhib. R.A. 1911)

In the same chapel stood till then the beautiful low fretted screens that now are set across the apse behind the altar, where indeed they remained till 1700, according to Dr. Ricci. The lower part of the apse and the piers of the presbytery have been covered with fine marbles, some of which are ancient, but the vault, the lunettes, and the walls are entirely encrusted with gorgeous mosaics.

The presbytery is approached from the inner octagon of the church under a triumphal arch. In the curve of this we see amid much decorative ornament fifteen circular discs containing the head of Our Lord, the twelve Apostles, S. Gervasius, and S. Protasius. Beneath these are two monuments variously formed, Dr. Ricci tells us, in the sixteenth century. The four columns which they contain originally supported the baldacchino over the high altar here; three of them are of verde antico. Framed by these columns are two Roman reliefs from a frieze originally in the Temple of Neptune, other parts of which are in the Sala Lapidaria in the Arcivescovado here, in the Louvre, in the Uffizi, in the Castello of Milan, and in the Museo Archeologico at Venice. They are indubitably of course the oldest things in the church.

Within this triumphal arch upon either side rise the tribunes in which the upper loggia of the church itself comes to an end. These tribunes, which are exceedingly beautiful, consist of two triple arches, one above the other on either side, and the columns which support them, with their marvellous capitals, are I suppose among the most glorious left in Christendom. The arches themselves and the lunettes upon either side are encrusted with mosaics. In the lunette upon the right on either side an altar gorgeously draped, Abel offers to God the firstling of his flock and Melchizedek Bread and Wine. Upon the face of the arch we see Moses tending the sheep of Jethro, Moses upon Mount Hebron, and Moses before the burning bush. In the lunette upon the left we have the sacrifice of Abraham of his only son, and the visit of the three angels to Abraham and Sara. Upon the face of the arch

we see Jeremiah the Prophet and Moses upon Mount Sinai. Above, upon the balustrades, as it were, of the upper loggia we see angels upholding a circle in which is the sign of the Cross, and above again upon the face of the arches on either side the four Evangelists and their symbols. The vault is entirely covered with ornaments in mosaic, amid which three angels rise and support with uplifted hands the central disc in which is represented the Agnus Dei.

Though these mosaics have suffered much from unforeseen disaster and from restoration they still delight us with their richness and splendour, and nothing I think can well be finer than their effect, their decorative effect as a whole. They seem to hang there like some gorgeous Eastern tapestry of Persian stuff, as Dr. Ricci says, some unfading and indestructible tapestry of the Orient left by chance or forgetfulness in the old capital of the West.

We now turn to the apse, which we enter under a second triumphal arch upon the face of which we see upon the left the city of Hierusalem and upon the left Bethlehem. A cypress stands at the gate of each, and between them two angels in flight uphold a discus or aureole having within it eight rays. Above this again are three windows about which is spread a gorgeous decoration in mosaic.

Beneath within the tribune of the apse we see Our Lord, "beautiful as Apollo," enthroned upon the orb of the world, an angel upon either hand, while to his right stands S. Vitalis to whom He hands a crown, to His left S. Ecclesius bearing the model of this church in his hand.

Beneath upon either side stand the two great mosaic pictures, the most marvellous works of the sixth century that have come down to us and perhaps the most glorious and splendid works of art which that age was able to achieve, and it is needless to say that there is nothing like them anywhere in the world.

Upon the left we see the great emperor, perhaps the greatest of all the Cæsars, Justinian, bearing in his hands a golden dish; beside him stands the archbishop of Ravenna,

S. Maximianus. A little behind these two figures and on either side stand five attendant priests, and on the extreme left of the picture is a group of soldiers.

In the mosaic upon the right we see the empress Theodora, straight browed, most gorgeously arrayed, very beautiful and a little sinister, bearing a golden chalice, attended by her splendid ladies and two priests. Upon the extreme left of the picture stands a little fountain before an open doorway hung with a curtain.

CAPITAL FROM S. VITALE

What can be said of these gorgeous and astonishingly lovely works? Nothing. They speak too eloquently for themselves. Not there do we see the mere realism of Rome, the careful and often too careful arrangement that Roman art, able to speak but incapable of song, always gives us. Here we have something at once more gorgeous and more mysterious and more artistic, a symbolical and hieratic art, the gift of the Orient, of Byzantium. In the best Roman art of the best period there is always something of the street, something too close to life, too mere a transcription and a copy of actual things, a mere imitation without life of its own. But here is something outside the classical tradition, outside what

imperial Rome with its philistinism and its puritanism has made of the art of Greece and thrust perhaps for ever upon Europe. Here we are free from the overwhelming commonplace of Roman art, its mediocrity and respectable endeavour.

It is, however, not in the gorgeous mosaics alone that we find the delight and originality of S. Vitale. The whole church is amazingly different from anything else to be seen in Italy, for it is altogether outside the Roman tradition, an absolutely Byzantine building as well in its construction as in its decoration. It must be compared with the later S. Sophia and SS. Sergius and Bacchus of Constantinople. These, however, are works more assured and more gracious than S. Vitale, and yet in its plan at least S. Vitale is a masterpiece, and altogether the one great sanctuary of Byzantine art of the time of Justinian that we have in the West. Every part of it is worthy of the strictest and most eager attention, from the ambulatory, which was covered in 1902 with old marble slabs and where there are two early Christian sarcophagi, to the restored Cappella Sancta Sanctorum with its fifth-century sarcophagus, the tomb of the exarch Isaac, and the lofty *Matronæum*, the women's gallery, from which the best view of the mosaics and the marvellously carved Byzantine capitals may be had. Nor should the narthex be forgotten, mere skeleton though it be. It is characteristic of such a church as this, and set as it is obliquely to it, is original in conception and curious.

When we have finished with S. Vitale it is well to leave Ravenna and to drive by the lofty road over the marshes to the solitary church of S. Apollinare in Classe which was built also by Giuliano Argentario for archbishop Ursicinus (535-538) and was consecrated by archbishop Maximianus in 549.

Classis, Classe, as we know, was the station or port of the Roman fleet, established and built by Augustus Cæsar. It was doubtless a great place enjoying the busy and noisy life of a great port and arsenal and possessed vast barracks for the soldiers and sailors of the imperial fleet. Later even when

disasters had fallen upon that great civilisation it maintained itself, and from the fifth to the seventh centuries we hear of its churches, S. Apollinare, S. Severo, S. Probo, S. Raffaele, S. Agnese, S. Giovanni "ad Titum," S. Sergio *juxta viridarium*, and the great Basilica Petriana.

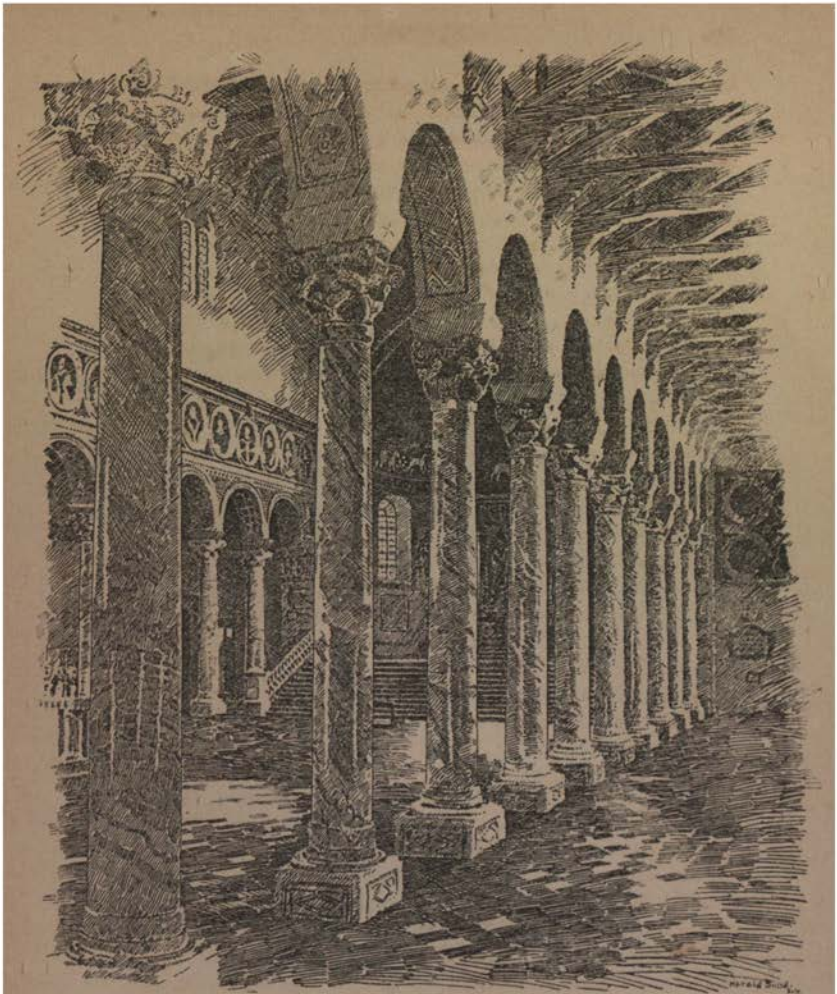
It was joined to the city of Ravenna by the long suburb of the Via Cæsarea, much I suppose as the Porto di Lido is joined to Venice by the Riva or as Rovezzano is joined to Florence by the Via Aretina. Of all the buildings that together made up the Castello of Classe and the suburb of Cæsarea nothing remains to us but the mighty church of S. Apollinare and its great and now tottering campanile. For Classe and Cæsarea seem to have been finally destroyed in the long Lombard wars, either as a precautionary measure by the people of Ravenna and the imperialists or by the attacking Lombards, while the sea which once washed the walls of Classe has retreated so far that it is only from the top of her last watch tower it may now be seen.

Nothing can be more desolate and sad than the miserable road across the empty country between Ravenna and that lonely church of S. Apollinare. In summer deep in dust that rises, under the heavy tread of the great oxen which draw the curiously painted carts of the countryside, in great clouds into the sky; in winter and after the autumn rains lost in the white curtain of mist that so often surrounds Ravenna, it is an almost impassable morass of mud and misery. Even at its best in spring time it is melancholy and curiously mean without any beauty or nobility of its own, though it commands so much of those vast spaces of flat and half desolate country which the sea has destroyed, on the verge of which stands the lonely church.

One comes to this great basilica always I think as to a ruin, to find without surprise the doors closed and only to be opened after long knocking. The round campanile that towers and seems to totter in its strange dilapidation beside the church is so beautiful that it surprises one at once by its melancholy

nobility in the midst of so much meanness and desolation. It is a building of the ninth century, and may well have been used as much as a watch tower as a bell tower. Till recently it had at its base a sacristy, but this has been swept away. Of old the church too had before it a great narthex of which certain ruins are left, among them a little tower on the left.

Within we find ourselves in a vast basilica divided into three naves upheld by twenty-four marvellous columns of great size and beauty, of Greek marble, with beautiful Byzantine bases and capitals. The central nave is closed by a curved apse set high over a great crypt thrust out beyond the rest of the church. Beyond the two aisles are two chapels each with its little curved apse. The walls of the church and the walls above the arcade were undoubtedly originally covered, in the one case with splendid marbles, in the other with mosaics. The walls of the church were, however, stripped in 1449 by Sigismondo Malatesta of Rimini when he was building, or rather encasing, the church of S. Francesco in Rimini with marbles, and turning what had been a Gothic church of brick into what we know as the Tempio Malatestiano, by the hands of Alberti. We know that a great quantity of marble of different kinds was gathered by Sigismondo from all parts of Italy, not only to furnish the interior of his *Tempio*, but to cover the exterior also according to the design of Leon Alberti. Even the sepulchral stones from the old Franciscan convent of S. Francesco in Rimini were used and the blocks which the people of Fano had collected for their church. S. Apollinare in Classe was then in Benedictine hands. With the consent of the Abate there, very many ancient and valuable marbles were torn from the walls and carried off by Sigismondo to Rimini; so many in fact that the people of Ravenna complained to the Venetian doge Francesco Foscari, saying that Sigismondo had despoiled the church. The doge, however, seems to have cared nothing about it and Sigismondo sent to Ravenna and to the Abate two hundred gold florins, so that both declared themselves satisfied. Then the church passed



INTERIOR OF S. APOLLINARE IN CLASSE

into the hands of the cardinal bishop of Bologna, brother of the pope, the learned humanist Nicholas V., who was friendly disposed towards Sigismondo. The cardinal appears readily to have given Sigismondo leave to take all he desired. And presently a hundred waggons arrived in Rimini laden with various marbles, the spoil of the church. In 1476, however, the Republic of Venice, which had held Ravenna since 1441, determined to restore S. Apollinare, but achieved very little. The portraits which now stand over the arcade of the bishops and archbishops of Ravenna from S. Apollinaris, the first bishop and titular of this church, are not the work of the fifteenth but of the eighteenth century.

But in spite of vandalism and ruin S. Apollinare remains one of the most interesting churches in Italy. In the midst of the nave there still happily stands the altar which S. Maximianus, the archbishop who consecrated the church in 549, erected. Doubtless of old it was surrounded by screens, as is the altar of the Duomo; these were probably lovely with tracery and over them rose the *ambone*. In the ninth century we learn that this altar, dedicated in honour of the Blessed Virgin, was covered with a beautiful baldachin upheld by four porphyry columns. Beneath was the confession where were laid the bones of S. Apollinaris, the first bishop of Ravenna, the disciple of S. Peter in Antioch. There, as it is said, they remained from the time of S. Maximianus, who brought them into the church from some other sanctuary, possibly, as Dr. Ricci suggests, from the church of S. Romoaldo, finally destroyed in the eighteenth century, till 1173, save for the brief period in which it is asserted the archbishop Maurus removed them and hid them away in the seventh century. In 1173 they were placed in the crypt in a beautiful sarcophagus of Greek marble. This sarcophagus still remains in the crypt, but the bones of the first bishop of Ravenna are now under the modern high altar of the church.

The high altar is reached by a flight of steps built in the eighteenth century. Over it was set a baldachin upheld by

four ancient columns of black and white Egyptian marble that dated from the end of the ninth century. In the apse itself we find at the ends of the choir part of the marble throne of Archbishop Damianus (688-708), and in the tribune here the great mosaic, the latest in Ravenna, dating, in so far as it is still original, from the sixth century.

CAPITAL FROM S. VITALE

There we see in the midst a vast Cross enclosed in a great circle. In the midst of the Cross is the head of the Saviour of the world. Above in the heavens the hand of the Eternal Father points downwards to the Cross beneath and upon either side kneel Moses and Elias. Beneath this great Cross, his hands uplifted as though he were calling us to prayer with the words *Dominus vobiscum*, stands S. Apollinaris vested in alb and chasuble, the Pallium about his shoulders. Towards him in the midst, on either side, six sheep seem to move among the flowers and trees and stones of a wood, in the background of which are three other sheep, two on one side and one on the other. According to Crowe and Cavalcaselle the space in which S. Apollinaris stands is divided into three courses, the first containing a Christian flock of twelve sheep, the second rocks and trees, and the third three sheep symbolising Apostles, separated from each other by trees. As it seems

to me, these three sheep belong rather to the upper part of the mosaic which, with the Cross in the midst, bearing the face of Our Lord, and on either side Moses and Elias, symbolises the Transfiguration. These three sheep would thus represent S. Peter, S. James and S. John.

Beneath between the windows we see represented four Bishops of Ravenna, S. Ursinus, S. Ursus, S. Severus, and S. Ecclesius. To the right are the sacrifices of Abel, Melchizedek, and Abraham. To the left the privileges of the church of Ravenna. In the midst we see an archbishop and the emperor who hands him a scroll on which is written *privilegia*. To the left are three priests bearing fire, incense, and a thurible. To the right are three other figures supporting the emperor as the three priests support the archbishop. Doubtless this mosaic records the privileges granted to the church of Ravenna by Constantinople. The archbishop is probably Reparatus who received so much from the Emperor Constantinus IV. Two of the figures who attend the emperor represent Heraclius and Tiberius. This mosaic is the latest in the church, dating from 668.

Over the arch of the tribune is a medallion bust of the Saviour holding a book in His left hand and blessing us with His right. Upon either side are symbols of the four Evangelists in the clouds of the sky. Beneath we see on either side the cities of Bethlehem and Hierusalem, from each of which issue six sheep—perhaps the twelve apostles. Beneath again are two palm trees and again the archangels Gabriel and Michael and S. Luke and S. Matthew.

These mosaics have often been remade and repaired. When Crowe and Cavalcaselle examined them before 1860 they found that the whole tunic of the Moses had been repainted and half the face of the Elias had been restored. They proceed: "The head of S. Apollinare is in part damaged, the left hand and lower part of the figure destroyed. The sheep beside S. Apollinare, but particularly those on the right of that figure, are almost completely modern. A large part of the

left side of the apsis is repainted, of the four bishops between the windows of the tribune the head of Ecclesius is preserved, the lower part repainted. The head of S. Ursinus is a new mosaic, and the lower half of the figure is restored. In the mosaic of the sacrifice half the head from the eyes upwards and part of the arms of Abel are repainted, the legs have become dropsical under repair. The figures of Abraham and Isaac are almost completely repainted, and the hands and feet are formless for that reason. This mosaic is repaired in two different ways with white cubes coloured over and with painted stucco. In the mosaic representing the tender of privileges the nimbi as already stated are new, but besides, the lower part of all the figures is repainted in stucco and the heads are all more or less repaired. Of the figures in the arch that of the archangel Gabriel is half ruined and half restored, and part of S. Matthew and S. Luke are new."

Since Crowe and Cavalcaselle wrote a vast restoration has been undertaken, and this was finished in 1908. It was very carefully carried out and it is to be believed that the work as we see it is now secure.

There is much else of interest in the church: the beautiful crypt with its ancient sarcophagus of S. Apollinare and its columns; the ten great sarcophagi which stand about the church, three of which contain the relics of archbishops of Ravenna; the curious tabernacle at the end of the north aisle. But a whole morning, or for that matter a whole day, is not too much to spend in this beautiful and deserted sanctuary which bridges for us so many centuries and in which we are made one with those who helped to establish the foundations of Europe.

XIV

RAVENNA IN THE MIDDLE AGE

THE last great original work to be undertaken in Ravenna as the capital of the empire in the West was the building and decoration of the churches of S. Vitale and S. Apollinare in Classe. All the Byzantine work that was done later in Ravenna is merely imitative, an expression of failing power under the crushing disaster of the Lombard invasion. When at last Aistulf in 751 made himself master of the impregnable city, it ceased, and suddenly, to be a capital, and though in 754 Pepin "restored" it to the papacy and established the pope throughout the Exarchate and the Pentapolis, he by that act founded the Papal States, whose capital of necessity was Rome. Thus Ravenna found herself when Charlemagne had been crowned emperor in 800 little more than a decaying provincial city, without authority or hope of resurrection, and it is as a city of the provinces full only of gigantic memories that she appears in the Middle Age and the Renaissance and remains to our own day.

The appearance of Charlemagne, the resurrection of the empire in the West, confirm and consolidate the misfortune of 751 in which indeed she lost everything. But when we see the great Frank strip the imperial palace of its marbles and mosaics it is as though the fate of Ravenna had been expressed in some great ceremony and not by unworthy hands. An emperor had set her up so high, an emperor had kept her

there so long; it was an emperor who, as in a last great rite, stript her of her apparel and left her naked with her memories.

Those memories, not only splendid and glorious, but gaunt and terrible too, smoulder in her ruined heart as the fire may do in the ashes when all that was living and glorious has been consumed. Almost nothing as she became when Charlemagne left her, a mere body still wrapt in gorgeous raiment stiff with gold, but without a soul, she still dreamt of dominion, of empire, and of power. Governed by her archbishops, she rebelled against Rome, struggled for a secular and sometimes a religious autonomy, and came at last, as surely might have been prophesied, to consider herself as a feudatory of the Empire, not of the Church.

THE CAMPANILE OF S. APOLLINARE

But though this struggle might have been foreseen it is futile, it has no life in it, it is without any real importance, it leads nowhere and fails to interest us. All that really concerns us in the confused story of Ravenna from the time of the resurrection of the empire till our own day are two strange incidents that have nothing fundamentally to do with her, that befell her by chance; I mean the apparition of Dante, when we see the most eager mediæval apologist of the imperial idea fortunately and rightly find in her a refuge and a tomb;

and the battle of 1512 in which fell Gaston de Foix and which cost the lives of twelve thousand men and achieved nothing.

Nevertheless Ravenna, for so long the citadel of the empire in the West, of all the cities of Italy was least likely to forget her origin or to forsake her memories, and it is both curious and interesting to watch her entry, little splendid though that entry be, into the marvellously vital world of the Middle Age in Italy.

The slow re-establishment of Latin power which followed the crowning of Charlemagne, and which the Church secured by that act, first began to come to its own with the rise of the bishops to civil power in the cities of Italy. Now Ravenna had certainly been governed by her archbishop ever since Pepin in 754 had forced Aistulf to place the keys of the city upon the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles. If nowhere else in the Cisalpine plain, Latin civilisation and law, then, never failed in Ravenna, and whatever may have happened elsewhere it might seem certain that here in Ravenna and probably throughout the exarchate the curia existed and endured throughout the barbarian confusion.

This would explain the early and extraordinary development of communal institutions in Ravenna. And since, one may believe, the Roman legions were replaced throughout the empire by the religious orders, it is interesting to know that in the tenth century her Latin energy is borne witness to by the fact that in 956 she produced S. Romuald of the Onesti family of Ravenna, who was educated in the Benedictine monastery of Classe and who founded the Order of Camaldoli, and toward the end of the same century, in 988, she produced S. Peter Damian, the brother of the arch-priest of Ravenna, cardinal-bishop of Ostia and papal legate in Milan.

Nor with the rise of the "spirito italico" everywhere in Italy do we find Ravenna exhausted. Far from it, she is as ardent as any other city of the peninsula whatsoever. Only always she is anti-papal, as though, living in her memories, as she could not but do, and this was her greatest strength, she

remembered her old allegiance to the emperor and could not forget that when the pope became his heir in Italy she had fallen from her old eminence. Thus as early as the first years of the eleventh century her archbishop obtains confirmation from the emperor of his temporal powers, in which confirmation no recognition of the sovereignty of the pope appears at all. This act of allegiance to the emperor was repeated when Barbarossa appeared, and indeed the archbishops of Ravenna soon became the most eager if not most the serious supporters of the emperors in all the great plain and perhaps in all Italy. Ravenna, once the imperial capital, though fallen was imperial still. She was haunted, haunted by ghosts that were restless in those marvellous tombs, that litter her churches, loom out of the grey curtain of mist like a fortress, or shine and glitter with imperishable colours and are full of memories as imperishable as themselves.

Yet though it was to her the emperors so often looked for aid and succour and rest, it was not always so. The present, even with her, was more than the past. With the great development of communal institutions which marked especially the twelfth century, compelled too to face, though never with success, the increasing state of Venice, which, indeed, and successfully, had usurped her place in the world and had realised what she had failed to achieve, she was ready and able in 1198 to place herself at the head of the league of the cities of the Romagna and the Marches against the imperial power then both oppressive and feeble; so that pope Innocent III. found it easy to restore the unforgotten rights of the Holy See there and these were ratified by Otto IV. and by Frederick II. as the price of papal support.

It will thus be readily understood that if, at the opening of the thirteenth century, there was one city in Italy more certain than another to be at the mercy of the universal quarrel of Guelf and Ghibelline, that city was Ravenna. In its larger sense that quarrel was her inheritance. It was the one thought which filled her mind. But here, as elsewhere,

the great quarrel was insoluble or at any rate not to be solved. It merely bred faction and divided the city against itself. Guelf and Ghibelline tore Ravenna as they tore Florence and Siena in pieces.

The two great Ghibelline families were the Ubertini and the Mainardi and these at first gained the mastery of the city; but in 1218 Pietro Traversari with the aid of the Mainardi turned the Ubertini out and, what is more, made himself master.

Pietro Traversari was succeeded as Podestà in 1225 by his son Paolo, who became Guelf and fought in Innocent IV.'s quarrel against the emperor Frederick II.; Frederick was able to turn the Traversari out of Ravenna in 1240 and to hold the city for eight years, but in 1248 the pope retook it and the Traversari were restored though not I think to the chief power. They remained in power till in the last year of the reign of Gregory X., 1275, Guido da Polenta appears.

Rudolph of Hapsburg was now king—not emperor, for he was never crowned by the pope. He had been a partisan of the second Frederick's, but pope Nicholas III. did not find in the founder of the Hapsburg dynasty the stuff of the Hohenstaufen. In 1278 he forced Rudolph to secure to him by an "irrevocable decree" all that the papacy had ever claimed in the Exarchate and the Pentapolis. The empire renounced all its claims in the Romagna and the Marches; the confines of the states of the Church were defined anew, and the cities of which the pope was absolute lord were named one by one. Of course among these was Ravenna.

The Polentani appear first in the story of Ravenna in or about the year 1167, when we find them acting as vicars for the archbishops. We next hear of them as Podestà, their long rule really beginning, as I have said, in 1275, when Guido il Vecchio, a rather formidable soldier, appears as captain of the people and victor over Cervia, whose territory he added to the dominion of Ravenna. It was indeed this man

who first in the Ravenna of the Middle Ages attempted to establish an independent or semi-independent state, by adding territory to territory and thus creating a lordship. For this end he allied himself with the Malatesta of Rimini—a master stroke, for the Polentani of Ravenna and the Malatesta of Rimini had long been bitter foes.

The alliance was cemented by a marriage which all the world knows as an immortal tragedy. Guido Vecchio had a beautiful daughter, Francesca. Malatesta had two sons, the elder Giovanni called, for he was a cripple, *lo Sciancato*, the younger, for he was very fair, known as Paolo *il Bello*. To secure their alliance Polenta married his daughter Francesca to Malatesta's elder son Giovanni; but she had already learned to love, or she soon came to love, his brother Paolo *il Bello*. Giovanni came upon them one night in Rimini and killed them both with one thrust of his sword. The tragedy, however, should only be told in the immortal words of Dante, who recounts the tale Francesca told him in the second circle of the Inferno. For seeing Francesca and her lover floating for ever in each other arms "light before the wind," as the wind swayed them towards Virgil and himself the Florentine addressed them:

" 'O wearied spirits! come, and hold discourse
With us, if by none else restrained.' As doves
By fond desire invited, on wide wings
And firm, to their sweet nest returning home,
Cleave the air, wafted by their will along;
Thus issued, from that troop where Dido ranks,
They, through the ill air speeding ; with such force
My cry prevailed, by strong affection urged.
'O gracious creature and benign! who go'st
Visiting, through this element obscure,
Us, who the world with bloody stain imbrued;
If, for a friend, the King of all, we own'd,
Our prayer to him should for thy peace arise,
Since thou hast pity on our evil plight.
Of whatsoe'er to hear or to discourse
It pleases thee, that will we hear, of that
Freely with thee discourse, while e'er the wind
As now, is mute. The land that gave me birth

Is situate on the coast, where Po descends
To rest in ocean with his sequent streams.-
'Love that in gentle heart is quickly learnt
Entangled him by that fair form, from me
Ta'en in such cruel sort, as grieves me still;
'Love that denial takes from none beloved
Caught me with pleasing him so passing well
That as thou seest, he yet deserts me not.
'Love brought us to one death; Caina waits
The soul who spilt our life.' Such were their words;
At hearing which downward I bent my looks
And held them there so long, that the bard cried:
'What art thou pondering?' I in answer thus:
'Alas! by what sweet thoughts, what fond desire
Must they at length to that ill pass have reached!'
Then turning, I to them my speech address'd,
And thus began: 'Francesca! your sad fate
Even to tears my grief and pity moves.
But tell me; in the time of your sweet sighs,
By what, and how Love gr'anted, that ye knew
Your yet uncertain wishes?' She replied:
'No greater grief then to remember days
Of joy when misery is at hand. That kens
Thy learn'd instructor. Yet so eagerly
If thou art bent to know the primal root
From whence our love gat being, I will do
As one who weeps and tells his tale. One day
For our delight we read of Lancelot,
How him love thrall'd. Alone we were and no
Suspicion near us. Oft-times by that reading
Our eyes were drawn together, and the hue
Fled from our altered cheek. But at one point
Alone we fell. When of that smile we read,
That wished smile, so rapturously kissed
By one so deep in love, then he, who ne'er
From me shall separate, at once my lips
All trembling kissed. The book and writer both
Were love's purveyors. In its leaves that day
We read no more.' While thus one spirit spake
The other wailed so sorely, that heart-struck
I, through compassion fainting, seem'd not far
From death, and like a corse fell to the ground."

With the name of Dante we come to the real importance Ravenna has for us in the Middle Age. Dante, however, was not the guest of Guido Vecchio. That great lord ruled in Ravenna as perpetual captain till his death in 1310, when

he was succeeded by his son Lamberto who had for some time been the leading spirit in the city. He altogether abolished the so-called democratic government, that is to say, the consulship which was filled in turn by two consuls, the one succeeding the other every fifteen days. Lamberto made himself lord and reigned till 1316, when he was succeeded by his nephew Guido Novello, the consul of Cesena, who thus brought Cesena into the lordship. It is with this man that a universal interest in Ravenna may be said for a moment to revive, for it was he who had the honour to be the host of Dante Alighieri.

Guido Novello was not a mere adventurer like Guido Vecchio, he was a man of considerable culture, with a love of learning and of the arts. It was, as we shall see, at his earnest solicitation that Dante came to visit him, and if we may believe Vasari it was at the poet's suggestion he invited Giotto to his court. "As it had come to the ears of Dante that Giotto was in Ferrara, he so contrived that the latter was induced to visit Ravenna, where the poet was then in exile, and where Giotto painted some frescoes which are moderately good . . . for the Signori da Polenta."

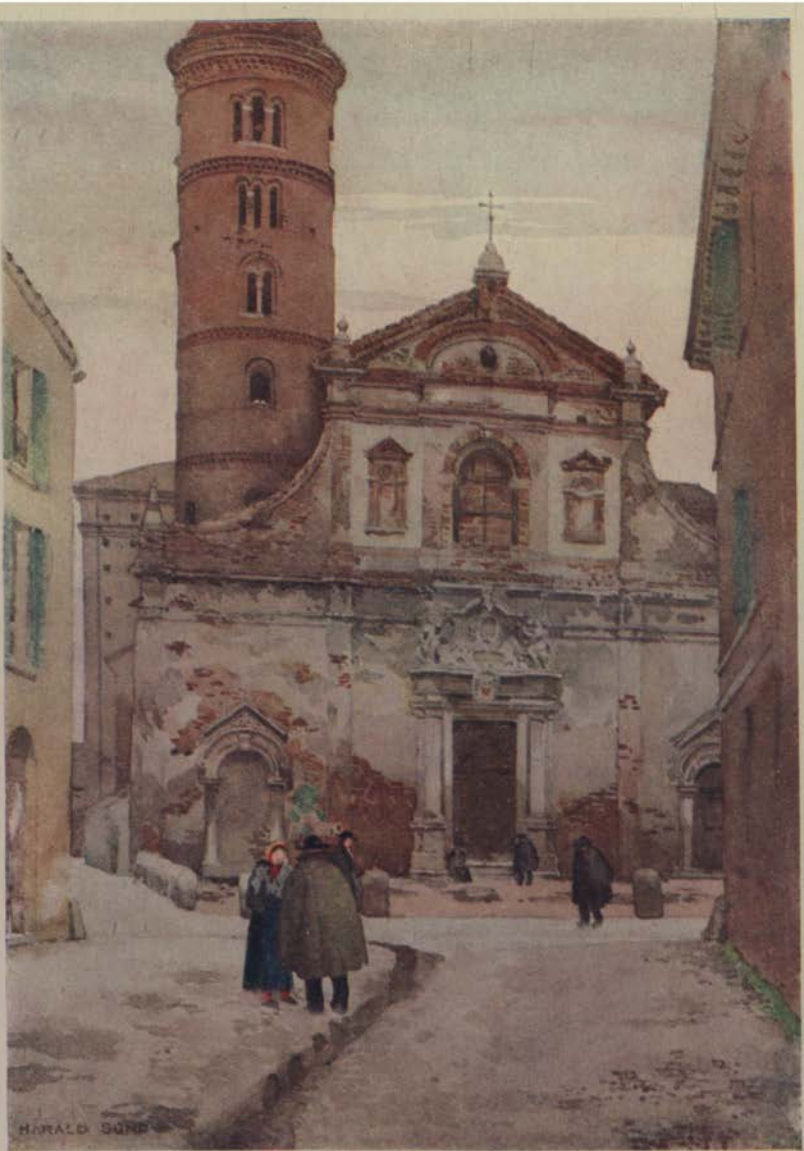
Dante as we may think spent the last four years of his life in Ravenna. Those four years we shall consider presently. Here it will be enough to note that he met his death at last in the service of his host and benefactor Guido Novello. The most disastrous action of his life was, it will be remembered, the embassy he made on behalf of his own city of Florence to pope Boniface VIII. That business cost him his home and the city he loved with so cruel a passion; it made him an exile. It was upon the longest journey of all that his last embassy sent him. He set out it seems as ambassador of Guido Novello for Venice, which so far as the sea and all its business are concerned had long replaced Ravenna as mistress of the Adriatic. The recent acquisition of the city and the salt flats of Cervia by Ravenna had become a grievance with the Venetians who desired that monopoly for themselves.

It seems that in some local quarrel at Cervia certain Venetian sailors had been killed and Dante went on Guido's behalf to clear the matter up. He was to be as it happened as unsuccessful in his last embassy as he had been in his first. The old doge, according to the legend which I am bound to say is now generally regarded as a fable, received him coldly and, so the tale runs, invited him to dinner upon a fast day. "In front of the envoys of other princes who were of greater account than the Polentani of Ravenna, and were served before Dante, the larger fish were placed, while in front of Dante was placed the smallest. This difference of treatment nettled Dante who took up one of the little fish in his hand and held it to his ear as though expecting it to say something. The doge observing this asked him what his strange behaviour meant. To which Dante replied: 'As I knew that the father of this fish met his death in these waters I was asking him news of his father.'

"'Well,' said the doge, 'and what did he answer?' Dante replied: 'He told me that he and his companions were too little to remember much about him; but that I might learn what I wanted to know from the older fish, who would be able to give me the news I asked for.'

"Thereupon the doge at once ordered Dante to be served with a fine large fish."

Thus Dante called attention to his great achievement, by which I suppose he hoped at once to vindicate his dignity as a great man, certainly greater than any one present, and by this means to lend importance to his mission. Whatever may have been the personal result of his sally, it did his mission no good at all. When the official interview took place Dante, if we may believe something of the apocryphal "Letter of Dante to Guido da Polenta," began to address the doge in Latin and was bidden to speak in Italian or to obtain an interpreter. His mission was a failure and Venice, who in the person of her doge did her best to show either her ignorance of the great poet who did her the honour of crossing her



S. GIOVANNI BATTISTA.

Piazza or of her philistine contempt of him, lives in the *Divine Comedy* only as an illustration of Hell:

> " Thus we from bridge to bridge . . .
> Pass'd on; and to the summit reaching, stood
> To view another gap, within the round
> Of Malebolge, other bootless pangs.
> Marvellous darkness shadow'd o'er the place.
> In the Venetian arsenal as boils
> Through wintry months tenacious pitch, to smear
> Their unbound vessels. . . .
> So not by force of fire but art divine
> Boiled here a glutinous thick mass, that round
> Limed all the shore."

On his way back to Ravenna by land, for the Venetians added to their shame by refusing him the sea passage, he caught a fever in the marshes and returned to Ravenna only to die: the mightiest of all those—emperors and kings—who lie in that " *generale sepolcro di santissimi corpi.*"

That was in 1321; and with the death of Dante our interest in Ravenna again becomes cold. Guido Novello soon fell, driven out of Ravenna, never to return, by Ostasio who had assassinated Guido's brother the archbishop-elect Rinaldo. Ostasio ruled with the title of vicar which he received both from Lewis the Bavarian and from pope Benedict XII. This vicious and cruel despot was succeeded by his equally cruel son Bernardino. He ruled for fourteen years, 1345-1359, not, however, without mishap, for his brothers conspired against him and flung him into prison at Cervia. He contrived, however, to turn the tables upon them and to hold them in the same dungeon where he himself had been their prisoner. He was succeeded at last by Guido Lucio, a man of some integrity; but he too was the victim of his family, his own sons rising up against him in his old age and in 1389 flinging him into prison where he died.

He was followed in the lordship of Ravenna by his son Ostasio. This man died in 1431, that is to say, in the midst of all the confusion, here in Romagna and the Marches, of the

fifteenth century, when the condottieri were one and all looking for thrones and such ambitions as those of the Visconti, of Francesco Sforza, of Sigismondo Malatesta, of Federigo of Urbino and of a host of *parvenus* were struggling for dominion and mastery. Thus it was that Ostasio's successor, Ostasio, in 1438 was compelled to make alliance with duke Filippo Maria of Milan. Venice, ever watchful, saw Visconti's game, remembered Cervia, and insisted upon Ostasio coming to Venice. While there he learned that Venice had annexed his dominion. Nor are we surprised to learn that he ended his days in a Franciscan convent, where he was mysteriously assassinated, probably by order of Venice. But with the entry of Venice into Ravenna the Middle Age, even in that far place, comes to an end. The Polentani were done with. A new and vigorous government ushered the old imperial city into the Renaissance.

XV

DANTE IN RAVENNA

BEFORE following the fortunes of Ravenna under that new and alien government into the Renaissance and the modern world, it will be well if we turn to examine more closely her one great moment in the Middle Age, the moment in which Dante found in her a last refuge, and then linger a little among such of her mediæval buildings as the modern world has left her.

In any attempt to deal, however briefly, with Dante's sojourn in Ravenna we must first find out what we really know concerning it and distinguish this from what is mere conjecture or deduction. Now the first authority for Dante's life generally, is undoubtedly Boccaccio, and as it happens he was in Ravenna, where he had relations, certainly in 1350 and perhaps in 1346. In 1350 he was the envoy of the Or San Michele Society, who by his hand sent Beatrice, the daughter of Dante, then a nun in the convent of S. Stefano dell' Uliva in Ravenna, ten gold florins. He was thus in communication with Dante's daughter so that when he came to write the *Vita di Dante*, probably in 1356-1357, he was certainly in possession of facts. It will be well then if we state to begin with in his own words what he has told us of the years Dante spent in Ravenna.

But first as to the date of Dante's coming to Ravenna. Boccaccio would seem to place it immediately after the death of Henry VII. in 1313. To modern scholarship this has

seemed incredible for various reasons, and it prefers to allow Dante to visit Verona first and to come to Ravenna in 1317. Yet let us hear Boccaccio.

He begins by telling us that the too early death of the emperor, who was poisoned, as is thought, at Buonconvento in southern Tuscany on S. Bartholomew's day in 1313, cast every one of his faction into despair " and Dante most of all; wherefore no longer going about to seek his own return from exile he passed the heights of the Apennines and departed to Romagna where his last day, that was to put an end to all his toils, awaited him.

" In those times was Lord of Ravenna (a famous and ancient city of Romagna) a noble cavalier whose name was Guido Novello da Polenta; he was well skilled in the liberal arts and held men of worth in the highest honour, especially such as excelled others in knowledge. And when it came to his ears that Dante, beyond all expectation, was now in Romagna and in such desperate plight, he, who had long time before known his worth by fame, resolved to receive him and do him honour. Nor did he wait to be requested by him to do this, but considering with how great shame men of worth ask such favours, with liberal mind and with free proffers he approached him, requesting from Dante of special grace that which he knew Dante must needs have begged of him, to wit, that it might please him to abide with him. The two wills, therefore, of him who received and of him who made the request thus uniting on one same end, Dante, being highly pleased by the liberality of the noble cavalier, and on the other side constrained by his necessities, awaited no further invitation but the first, and took his way to Ravenna, where he was honourably received by the lord thereof, who revived his fallen hope by kindly fosterings; and giving him abundantly such things as were fitting, he kept him with him there for many years, yea, even to the last year of his life.

" Never had his amorous longings, nor his grieving tears, nor his domestic anxieties, nor the seducing glory of public

offices, nor his miserable exile, nor his unendurable poverty, been able with all their force to turn Dante aside from his main intent, to wit, from sacred studies; for as will be seen hereafter, when mention shall be made severally of the works that he composed, he will be found to have exercised himself in writing in the midst of all that is fiercest among these

CASA POLENTANA

passions. And if in the teeth of such and so many adversaries as have been set forth above, he became by force of genius and of perseverance so illustrious as we see, what may we suppose he would have been if, like many another, he had had even as many supports; or, at least, had had no foes; or but few? Indeed I know not. But were it lawful so to say, I would declare that he had surely become a God upon the earth.

"Dante then, having lost all hope of a return to Florence,

though he retained the longing for it, dwelt in Ravenna for a number of years, under the protection of its gracious lord. And here by his teachings he trained many scholars in poetry, especially in the vernacular, which vernacular to my thinking he first exalted and brought into repute amongst us Italians no otherwise than did Homer his amongst the Greeks or Virgil his amongst the Latins. Before him, though it is supposed that it had already been practised some short space of years, yet was there none who by the numbering of the syllables and by the consonance of the terminal parts had the feeling or the courage to make it the instrument of any matter dealt with by the rules of art; or rather it was only in the lightest of love poems that they exercised themselves therein. But he showed by the effect that every lofty matter may be treated in it; and made our vernacular glorious above every other.

"But since his hour is assigned to every man, Dante when already in the middle or thereabout of his fifty-sixth year fell sick and in accordance with the Christian religion received every Sacrament of the Church humbly, and devoutly, and reconciled himself with God by contrition for everything, that, being but man, he had done against His pleasure; and in the month of September in the year of Christ one thousand three hundred and twenty-one, on the day whereon the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is celebrated by the Church, not without greatest grief on the part of the aforesaid Guido and generally all the other Ravennese citizens, he rendered up to his Creator his toil-worn spirit, the which I doubt not was received into the arms of his most noble Beatrice, with whom, in the sight of Him who is the supreme good, the miseries of this present life left behind, he now lives most joyously in that life the felicity of which expects no end.

"The magnanimous cavalier placed the dead body of Dante, adorned with poetic insignia, upon a funeral bier, and had it borne on the shoulders of his most distinguished citizens to the place of the Minor Friars in Ravenna, with such honour as he deemed worthy of such a corpse. And here,

public lamentations as it were having followed him so far, he had him placed in a stone chest, wherein he still lieth. And returning to the house in which Dante lately lived, according to the Ravennese custom he himself delivered an ornate and long discourse both in commendation of the profound knowledge and the virtue of the deceased, and in consolation of his friends whom he had left in bitterest grief. He purposed, had his estate and his life endured, to honour him with so choice a tomb that if never another merit of his had made him memorable to those to come, this tomb should have accomplished it.

"This laudable intent was in brief space of time made known to certain who in those days were most famous for poetry in Ravenna; whereon each one for himself, to show his own power and to bear witness to the goodwill he had to the dead poet, and to win the grace and love of the signore, who was known to have it at heart, made verses which, if placed as epitaph on the tomb that was to be, should with due praises teach posterity who lay therein. And these verses they sent to the glorious signore, who, by great guilt of Fortune, in short space of time lost his estate, and died at Bologna; wherefore the making of the tomb and the placing of the verses thereon were left undone. Now when these verses were shown to me long afterward, perceiving that they had never been put in their place, by reason of the chance already spoken of, and pondering on the present work that I am writing, how that it is not indeed a material tomb, but is none the less—as that was to have been—a perpetual preserver of his memory, I imagined that it would not be unfitting to add them to this work. But in as much as no more than the words of some one of them (for there were several) would have been cut upon the marble, so I held that only the words of one should be written here; wherefore on examining them all I judged that the most worthy for art and for matter were fourteen verses made by Messer Giovanni del Virgilio the Bolognese, a most illustrious and great poet of those days,

and one who had been a most especial friend of Dante. And the verses are these hereafter written:

"'Theologus Dantes, nullius dogmatis expers,
Quod foveat claro philosophia sinu;
Gloria musarum, vulgo gratissimus auctor,
Hic iacet, et fama pulsat utrumque polum;
Qui loca defunctis, gladiis regnumque gemellis,
Distribuit, laicis rhetoricisque modis.
Pascua Pieriis demum resonabat avenis;
Atropos heu letum livida rupit opus.
Huic ingrata tulit tristem Florentia fructum,
Exilium, vati patria cruda suo.
Quem pia Guidonis gremio Ravenna Novelli
Gaudet honorati continuisse ducis.
Mille trecentenis ter septem Numinis annis,
Ad sua septembris idibus astra redit.'" [1]

So far Boccaccio. Though his account tells us much it certainly does not permit us to make many definite statements as to Dante's life in Ravenna. One of the first things, for instance, that any modern biographer would have noted with accuracy would have been the house in which Dante lived. Something definite, too, we might have expected as to his friends and correspondents, as to his occupations and habits. Of all this there is almost nothing. It will, however, especially be noted that Boccaccio speaks of Dante as "training many scholars in poetry especially in the vernacular." What can this mean?

It has been suggested and with some authority that Dante

[1] The translation is Mr. Wicksteed's *The Early Lives of Dante.* He adds a translation of the verses: "Theologic Dante, a stranger to no teaching that philosophy may cherish in her illustrious bosom; glory of the Muses, author most acceptable to the commonalty; lieth here and smiteth either pole with his fame; who assigned their places to the dead, and their jurisdictions to the twin swords, in laic and rhetoric modes. And lastly, with Pierian pipe he was making the pasture lands resound; black Atropos, alas, broke off the work of joy. For him ungrateful Florence bore the dismal fruit of exile, harsh fatherland to her own bard. But Ravenna's piety rejoices to have gathered him into the bosom of Guido Novello, her illustrious chief. In one thousand three hundred and three times seven years of the Deity, he went back on September's Ides to his own stars."

was not entirely dependent upon his host Guido Novello, that he was able to gain a livelihood, at least, by lectures either in his own house or in some public place, and that it is even probable that he occupied an official position in Ravenna of a very honourable sort, that he was, in fact, professor of Rhetoric in that city. There is no evidence to support such a theory. It is true that though we know the names of the professors of Grammar or Rhetoric in the very ancient schools of Ravenna, schools which date from the time of Theodosius the Great, we do not find the name of him who filled that chair during the time of Dante's sojourn in Ravenna. In 1268 Pasio della Noce was lecturing on Jurisprudence in Ravenna; in 1298 Ugo di Riccio was professor of Civil Law there; in 1304 Leone da Verona is teaching Grammar and Logic in the city. Then we hear no more till we come to the year 1333, when a certain Giovanni Giacomo del Bando is professor.[1] The mere absence of names—a silence which does not coincide in any way with Dante's advent or with Dante's death—is, certainly, not enough to allow us to assert the probability of the great poet's having filled the office of lecturer or professor of Civil Law in the school of Ravenna. It is true that Saviozzo da Siena tells us:

> "*Qui cominciò a leggere Dante in pria*
> *Retorica vulgare e molti aperti*
> *Fece di sua Poetica armonia,*"

and that Manetti, an early biographer, seems to support the theory. But the best evidence, if evidence it can be called, which we have for this theory is to be found in a codex in the Laurentian Library, quoted by Bandini and cited by Dr. Ricci, which says: "It is commonly reported that Dante, being in

[1] For a full discussion of all that may be known of Dante at the Polenta court see Dr. Ricci's large work, *L'Ultimo Rifugio di Dante* (1891). A charming book in English, *Dante in Ravenna* (1898), by Catherine Mary Phillimore, is to a great extent based upon Dr. Ricci's work. A valuable book that should be consulted is the more recent volume by P. H. Wicksteed and E. G. Gardner, *Dante and Giovanni del Virgilio* (1902).

Ravenna, studying and giving lectures as a doctor to his pupils upon various works, the schools became the resort of many learned men." This statement upon hearsay, however, does little more than confirm the definite assertion of Boccaccio that Dante "trained many scholars," not in civil law, but in "poetry, especially in the vernacular."

It is quite unproved then that Dante lectured in Ravenna as a professor of Civil Law. It might seem equally certain that he did lecture upon Poetry and the vulgar tongue, and it seems likely that we have the text of his lectures in the latter if not in the earlier part of the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* "in which in masterly and polished Latin he reproves all the vulgar dialects of Italy." Boccaccio tells us he composed this when he was "already nigh his death," and though modern criticism seems inclined to date its composition not later than 1306 the evidence of Boccaccio is not lightly to be set aside.[1]

Lonely as he doubtless was in Ravenna he was not alone there. With him it would seem was his daughter Beatrice, who became a nun in S. Stefano dell' Uliva, and his sons Pietro and Jacopo. The latter, though a lawyer and not in holy orders, held two benefices in Ravenna, but most of his time seems to have been spent in Verona where Jacopo, his brother, later held a canonry. And then there were his friends.

In his lectures upon Poetry one of his most eager pupils would seem to have been his best friend and host, Guido Novello, who evidently knew well at least those parts of the *Divine Comedy*, chiefly the *Inferno* be it noted, which deal with his ancestors, for he quotes one of the most famous of them—an unforgettable line spoken by his aunt Francesca da Rimini:

"Questi che mai da me non fia diviso."

in a sonnet of his own.[2]

[1] The first part of this work was certainly not written later than 1306: the second part may well have been later.

[2] Cf. *Ultimo Rifugio*, p. 384, where the sonnet is given in full.

After the lord Guido Novello, we must name the archbishop of Ravenna, Rainaldo Concorreggio, as among Dante's friends. It is possible that he had known Dante at the University of Bologna and he had been a chaplain of Boniface VIII. He was a brave man, learned in theology, law, and music, and devoted to his religion, an eager student, and he had composed a treatise which has come down to us upon Galla Placidia and her church.

And then there was Giotto who came to paint if not in S. Maria in Porto fuori, certainly in S. Giovanni Evangelista. He was Dante's dear friend and it was probably at the poet's suggestion he had been invited to Ravenna. We do not know whether these two men attended Dante's lectures. But the true audience there which came simply to hear was probably various, consisting of poets, notaries, and all sorts of men, some of whom were Dante's friends and companions. There was Ser Dino Perini, Ser Pietro di Messer Giardino—he was a notary—and Fiduccio dei Milotti, who walked with Dante in the Pineta. All these names have come down to us in the Latin eclogues written by Dante while in Ravenna to his friend Giovanni del Virgilio—del Virgilio because he could so well imitate Virgil.

These eclogues are full of shrewd and curious thought, a real correspondence, and they help us to see the men who surrounded the poet in Ravenna. They do not, however, give us so extraordinary an impression of the strength and keenness of Dante's powers of observation as many a passage in the *Divine Comedy* in which Ravenna and the rude and fierce world of the Romagna of that day live for ever. It is in answer to the inquiries of the great Guido of Montefeltro that Dante speaks of Romagna in the *Inferno*. Feeble and anæmic though the great lines become in any translation, even so all their virtue is not lost:

> " Never was thy Romagna without war
> In her proud tyrants' bosoms, nor is now;
> But open war there left I none. The state
> Ravenna hath maintained this many a year

Is steadfast. There Polenta's eagle [1] broods,
And in his broad circumference of plume
O'ershadows Cervia.[2] The green talons [3] grasp
The land, that stood e'erwhile the proof so long
And piled in bloody heap the host of France.
The old mastiff of Verrucchio and the young [4]
That tore Montagna [5] in their wrath still make
Where they are wont, an augre of their fangs,
Lamone's [6] city and Santerno's [7] range
Under the lion of the snowy lair,[8]
Inconstant partisan, that changeth sides
Or ever summer yields to winter's frost.
And she whose flank is washed of Savio's wave [9]
As 'twixt the level and the steep she lies,
Lives so 'twixt tyrant power and liberty."

All Romagna with its untamable fierceness and confusion lies in these lines which, as Dante wrote them, seem as unalterable as those in which the creation of the world is described.

Nor is Dante forgetful of the great destiny that had been Ravenna's. In the sixth canto of the *Paradiso* it is Justinian himself, "*Cesare fui e son Giustiniano*," who recounts to Dante the victories of the Roman eagle:

" When from Ravenna it came forth and leap'd
The Rubicon; "

or when

" with Belisarius
Heaven's high hand was linked; "

or when

" The Lombard tooth with fang impure
Did gore the bosom of the Holy Church
Under its wings, victorious, Charlemagne
Sped to her rescue."

[1] The coat of the Polenta.
[2] Cervia, the least secure of the Polenta possessions.
[3] The green lion of the Ordelaffi of Forlì.
[4] Malatesta and Malatestino, lords of Rimini, deriving from Verrucchio, a castle in the hills.
[5] The Malatesta were Guelfs; Montagna de' Parcitati, whom they murdered, was the leader of the Ghibelline party in Rimini.
[6] Faenza. [7] Imola.
[8] Maghinardo Pagano, whose arms were a blue lion in a white field.
[9] Cesena.

Nor is Dante forgetful of Ravenna's other claims to glory. In the seventh heaven, which is the planet Saturn, led by Beatrice, he finds S. Romualdo, and speaks of S. Peter Damiano, and blessed Peter *Il Peccatore*, the founder of the church of S. Maria in Porto fuori, two of them of the Onesti house of Ravenna.

> "In that place was I Peter Damiano
> And Peter the sinner dwelt in the house
> Of our blest Lady on the Adriatic shore."

Of the earlier Podestà, too, he is not unmindful:

> "Arrigo Mainardi, Pier Traversaro, . . .
> Wonder not, Tuscan, if thou seest me weep
> When I recall those once loved names . . .
> With Traversaro's house and Anastagio's,
> Each race disinherited."

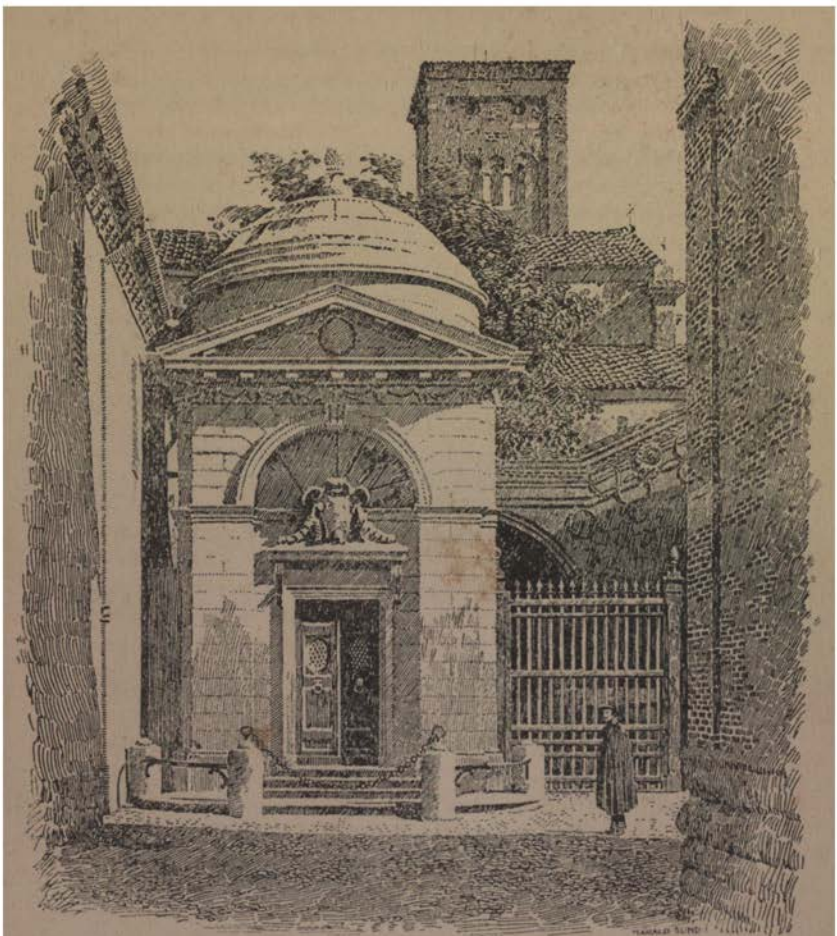
With the pitiful story of Francesca da Polenta we have seen how he dealt and how he spoke of Guido Vecchio. These people live because of him, and Ravenna in the Middle Age still holds our interest and our love because he dwelt there and she harboured him.

It was in her service, too, he met his death as we have seen, and in her church of the Friars Minor that he was laid to rest by Guido Novello.

Nine months later the lord of Ravenna received the first complete copy of the *Divina Commedia*, made by Jacopo Alighieri from his father's autograph. A very curious incident is related by Boccaccio in connection with this. It was Dante's custom, Boccaccio tell us, "whenever he had done six or eight cantos, more or less, to send them from whatever place he was in before any other had seen them to Messer Cane della Scala, whom he held in reverence above all other men; and when he had seen them, Dante gave access to them to whoso desired. And having sent to him in this fashion all save the last thirteen cantos, which he had finished, but had not yet sent him, it came to pass that, without bearing it in his mind that he was abandoning them, he died. And when they who

were left behind, children and disciples, had searched many times, in the course of many months, amongst all his papers, if haply he had composed a conclusion to his work, and could by no means find the remaining cantos; and when every admirer of his in general was enraged that God had not at least lent him to the world so long that he might have had opportunity to finish what little remained of his work; they had abandoned further search in despair since they could by no means find them.

"So Jacopo and Piero, sons of Dante, both of them poets in rhyme, moved thereto by certain of their friends, had taken it into their minds to attempt to supplement the parental work, as far as in them lay, that it might not remain imperfect, when to Jacopo, who was far more zealous than the other in this work, there appeared a wondrous vision, which not only checked his foolish presumption but showed him where were the thirteen cantos which were wanting to this Divine Comedy and which they had not known where to find. A worthy man of Ravenna whose name was Piero Giardino, long time a disciple of Dante's, related how, when eight months had passed after the death of his master, the aforesaid Jacopo came to him one night near to the hour that we call matins, and told him that that same night a little before that hour he, in his sleep, had seen his father, Dante, approach him, clad in whitest garment, and his face shining with an unwonted light; whom he seemed to ask if he were yet living, and to hear in reply that he was, but in the true life, not in ours. Whereon he seemed further to ask him if he had finished his work or ever he passed to that true life; and if he had finished it, where was the missing part, which they had never been able to find. To this he seemed to hear again in answer, 'Yea! I finished it.' Whereon it seemed that he took him by the hand and led him to that chamber where he was wont to sleep when he was living in this life; and touching a certain spot said, 'Here is that which ye so long have sought.' And no sooner was uttered that word than it seemed that both Dante and sleep departed from him at



DANTE'S TOMB

the same moment. Wherefore he averred that he could not hold but come and signify what he had seen, that they might go together and search in the place indicated to him, which he held most perfectly stamped in his memory, to see whether a true spirit or a false delusion had shown it him. Wherefore since a great piece of the night still remained, they departed together and went to the place indicated, and there found a mat fixed to the wall, which they lightly raised and found a recess in the wall which neither of them had ever seen, nor knew that it was there; and there they found certain writings all mouldy with the damp of the wall and ready to rot had they stayed there much longer; and when they had carefully removed the mould and read, they saw that they contained the thirteen cantos so long sought by them. Wherefore, in great joy, they copied them out, and after the author's wont sent them first to Messer Cane and then joined them on, as was meet, to the imperfect work. In such a manner did the work of so many years see its completion."

As Boccaccio tells us, Guido Novello had scarce buried Dante in that temporary tomb in the church of the Friars Minor when he lost his lordship. On April 1, 1322, he was elected captain of the people in Bologna, and when he was about to return to Ravenna he suddenly heard that the archbishop had been murdered and that the city was in the hands of his enemies. Do what he would he never returned to his own city, and thus his intentions with regard to the tomb of the poet were never carried out. The noble sepulchre which Guido had planned was not built and the body of Dante reposed in the ancient sarcophagus in which it had been first placed. There it remained when Boccaccio came to Ravenna, probably in 1346 and certainly in 1350, as the bearer of a gift from the Or San Michele Society to Beatrice di Dante, then a nun in S. Stefano dell' Uliva.

Boccaccio, it will be remembered, had in his life of Dante bitterly upbraided Florence for her treatment of her greatest son, and to his blame had added a prophecy that she would soon

repent of her shameful ingratitude and would envy Ravenna "the body of him whose works have held the admiration of the whole world." This prophecy fulfilled itself many times and first in 1396. In that year, upon December 22, Florence made the first of her many demands for the body of Dante, which she now wished to bury in S. Maria del Fiore. The demand, as Boccaccio had foreseen, was refused. It was repeated in 1429 and again refused. By 1476, when her next attempt was made, Ravenna had passed into the power of the Venetian Republic. It was therefore to Venice that Florence now turned through the Venetian ambassador, who is said to have been none other than Bernardo Bembo.

Bembo's request on behalf of Florence was, of course, a failure, but he seems to have himself repaired the tomb and to have placed upon it an epitaph.

> "Exigua tumuli Dantes hic sorte jacebas
> Squallenti nulli cognite pene situ.
> At nunc marmoreo subnixus conderis arcu
> Omnibus et cultu splendidiore nites.
> Nimirum Bembus musis incensus ethruscis
> Hoc tibi quem in primis hoc coluere dedit.
> Ann. Sal. mccccIxxxiii. vi. Kal. Jvn.
> Bernardus Bemb. Præt. ære suo Posuit."

His work of reparation and of adornment was carried out by Pietro Lombardo who was already at work in Ravenna for the Venetian republic, the sculptured effigy of Dante in relief being also from his hand.

But Florence was by no means at the end of her resources. In 1509 Ravenna had passed into the hands of the pope. In 1519 Leo X., a Medici, being on the throne of Peter, the Accademia Medicea of Florence petitioned the pope (among the signatories of the petition was Michelangelo, who offered to "make a worthy sepulchre for the divine poet in an honoured place" in Florence), to be allowed to carry away the bones of Dante from Ravenna to the City of Flowers. The pope gave the Florentine envoys the permission they required as was

expected. They proceeded to Ravenna and opened the sarcophagus; but when they lifted the lid, they found it empty, save for " a fragment of bone and a few withered leaves of the laurel which had adorned the poet's head." From that time till our own day the resting place of Dante's bones has been a complete mystery.

It is recorded that in the middle of the seventeenth century the Franciscans rebuilt and repaired the so-called chapel of Braccioforte at S. Francesco, which till then had been joined by a portico to the tomb of Dante. In 1658 this portico among other alterations was removed, and the exterior of the tomb itself was reconstructed with an entrance into the Piazza, as we see it. The interior of the tomb was, however, left in some confusion so that the papal legate determined himself to repair it. In this he met with much opposition from the friars who claimed, as of old, jurisdiction over the sepulchre. Nevertheless he completed the work, and in 1692 placed the following upon the tomb:

Exulem a Florentia Dantem Liberalissime
Excepit Ravenna.
Vivo fruens Mortuum colens
Magnis cineribus licet in parvo magnifici parentarunt
Polentani Principes erigendo
Bembus Prætor Luculentissime extruendo
Prætiosum Musis et Apollini Mausoleum
Quod injuria temporum pene squallens
E. mo Dominico Maria Cursio Legato
Joanne Salviato Prolegato
Magni civis cineres Patriæ reconciliare
Cultus perpetuitate curantibus
S. P. Q. R.
Jure Ac Aere suo
Tanquam Thesaurum suum munivit
Instauravit ornavit
A.D. MDCXCII.

Outside the tomb he placed his coat-of-arms, and on either side that of the legate of the province and that of the Franciscan Order.

In 1760 the third restoration was undertaken and the tomb assumed the form we now see and was given yet another inscription:

Danti Alighiero
Poetae sui temporis primo
Restitutori
Politioris humanitatis
Guido et Hostasius Polentiani
clienti et hospiti peregre defuncto
monumentum fecerunt.
Bernardus Bembus Praetor Venet. Ravenn.
Pro meritis eius ornatu excoluit.
Aloysius Valentius Gonzaga Card.
Leg. prov. Aemil.
Superiorum Temporum negligentia corruptum
Operibus ampliatis
Munificentia sua restituendum
curavit
Anno M DCC LXXX.

At the same time the tomb was opened again and was found to be empty. In spite of this fact in 1864 the municipal authorities in Florence wrote to Ravenna again demanding the body of the poet, only to be again refused. This, however, was the sixth centenary of Dante's birth and the sarcophagus was again to be opened to "verify the remains." The workmen were indeed at work upon some necessary repairs and draining, when it was found that a part of the wall of the Braccioforte chapel would have to be removed. In setting to work upon this—little more than the removal of a few stones——the pickaxe of one of the workmen struck against wood, and presently a wooden box appeared which partly fell to pieces, revealing a human skeleton. Within the box was found this inscription:

Dantis ossa
Denuper revisa die 3 Junii
1677

and without, this:

Dantis ossa
A me Fre Antonio Santi
hic posita
Ano 1677 die 18 Octobris

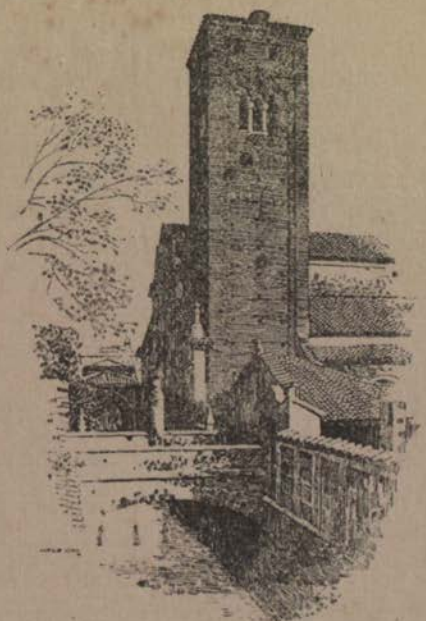
Medical experts were summoned. They made, Miss Phillimore tells us, "a careful examination of the bones, and proceeded to reconstruct the skeleton. . . . The stature answered to that of the poet as nearly as the measurement of a skeleton can represent the living form, and the skull found in the chest corresponded exactly with the mask taken from Dante's face immediately after his death, which was brought from Florence for the purpose of making this comparison."

What seems to have happened has been made clear for us by Dr. Ricci. Between 1483, when Bembo reconstructed the tomb, and 1520, when the Florentines again claimed the body, and for the first time with a certainty of success, the body of Dante disappeared. It seems that in 1520 the Franciscans entered the mausoleum, abstracted the body, and hid it to save it for Ravenna. In June 1677 Fra Antonio visited the bones in their hiding place and verified them. In October of the same year they were built into the new wall where the old entrance to the Braccioforte chapel had been; to be discovered by chance in 1865.

It is curious that even as the last cantos of the *Divine Comedy* were discovered by means of a dream, so a dream went before the discovery of the bones of Dante.

"The sacristan of the Franciscan confraternity," we read, "called La Confraternità della Mercede, was wont to sleep in the damp recesses of the ancient chapel of Braccioforte. His name was Angelo Grillo. . . . This sacristan declared himself to have seen in a dream a shade issue from the spot where the body was found, clad in red, that it passed through the chapel into the adjoining cemetery. It approached him,

and on being asked who it was, replied, 'I am Dante.' The sacristan died in May 1865, a few days before the discovery of the bones on the 27th of that month. Upon June 26, 1865, the bones of Dante were replaced in their original sarcophagus, ornamented by Pietro Lombardi, after having lain in state for three days, during which thousands from all over Italy passed before them. There it is to be hoped they will remain.



CAMPANILE OF S. FRANCESCO

XVI

MEDIÆVAL RAVENNA

THE CHURCHES

When we come to examine what is left to us of mediæval Ravenna, of the buildings which were erected there during the Middle Age, we shall find, as we might expect, very little that is either great or splendid, for, as we have seen, after the first year of the ninth century Ravenna fell from her great position and became nothing more than a provincial city, perhaps more inaccessible than any other in the peninsula. Her achievement such as it was in the earlier mediæval period consisted in the production of three men of real importance, S. Romuald of the Onesti family of Ravenna, who was born in the city about the year 956 and who founded, as we know, the Order of Camaldoli; S. Peter Damian, who was born there about 988; and Blessed Peter of Ravenna, Pietro degli Onesti, called *Il Peccatore*, of the same stock as S. Romuald.

The work of S. Romuald was a reform of the Benedictine Order. The Order of Camaldoli which he founded was the second reform which had come out of the great brotherhood of S. Benedict; it was younger than the Cluniac but older than the Cistercian reform, and it was begun in 1012. In that year S. Romuald, who was a Benedictine abbot, having been dismissed by all the houses over which he had successively ruled, for they would not bear the penitential strictness of his government, founded a hermitage at Camaldoli

S. MARIA IN PORTO.

above the upper valley of the Arno called the Casentino. There each monk lived in a separate dwelling, all being enclosed in a great wall some five hundred and thirty yards about, beyond which the monks were forbidden to go. They followed the Rule of S. Benedict, kept two Lents in the year, and never tasted meat. They had, of course, a church in common where they were bound to recite the divine office, for this is of the essence of the Rule of S. Benedict, but certain among them—and this is the essence of the reform of Camaldoli—never quitted their cells, their food being brought to them in their huts, where, if the recluse were a priest, he said his Mass, assisted by some one close by but not in the same room. Thus we see the monks and the hermits living side by side, but scarcely together, and so they continued from the year 1012 till our own day, which has seen the great Camaldoli suppressed. The device of the order was a cup or chalice out of which two doves drank, representing thus the two classes of hermits and monks, the contemplative and the active life.

The second great Ravennese of the Middle Age, S. Peter Damian, who was born about 988 in Ravenna, of a good but at that time poor family, was the youngest of many children. He was early left an orphan, and living in his brother's house was treated, it would appear, rather as a beast than a man. Presently, however, another brother, then archpriest of Ravenna, took pity on him and had him educated, first at Faenza but after at Parma, where he studied under a famous master. Here he became immersed in the religious life so that when two monks belonging to Fonte Avellana, "a desert at the foot of the Apennines in Umbria," happened to call at the place of his abode he followed them. After a life of penitence and hardship, in 1057 pope Stephen IX. prevailed upon him to quit his desert and made him cardinal-bishop of Ostia, and later pope Nicholas II. sent him to Milan as his legate, till in 1062 the successor of Nicholas allowed him to return to his solitude; but in 1063 he was sent to France as

papal legate. Later we find him as papal ambassador in Ravenna—this in 1072. He was then a very old man, and on his way back to Rome he died at Faenza.

This famous saint has often been confused with the third great Ravennese of this time, Pietro degli Onesti, called Pietro *Il Peccatore*.[1] This confusion, which Dante disposes of in the well-known passage of the *Paradiso :*

> " In quel loco fui io, Pier Damiano,
> e Pietro Peccator fu nella casa
> Di nostra Donna in sul lito Adriano,[2]

is commented upon in one of Boccaccio's letters to his friend Petrarch.[3] It is true both Peters were of Ravenna, but whereas Blessed Pietro *Il Peccatore* was of the Onesti family, as was S. Romuald, S. Pietro Damiano was not; the last died in 1072 at Faenza as we have seen, the first as we may think in 1119.

Now though all were famous and all were of Ravenna it is the last and I suppose the least of them who is most closely connected with the city. The others went away and won, not only great place in the world, but an everlasting fame. Blessed Pietro *Il Peccatore* stayed in Ravenna and built there outside the walls in the marsh between Ravenna and Classe the great home of Our Lady, S. Maria in Porto fuori. About the middle of the eleventh century, Dr Ricci tells us, certain religious retired into the solitude by the shore of the Adriatic and there built a little church or oratory that was called S. Maria *in fossula.* In this act we may certainly see the example of S. Romuald. But about 1096 there joined himself to them Pietro degli Onesti called *Il Peccatore*, and perhaps because he

[1] It is I confess doubtful whether Pietro degli Onesti was ever called *Il Peccatore* till a later epoch. The authenticity of the letters in which he so styles himself is open to question and the inscription on his tomb is it seems of the fifteenth century.

[2] *Paradiso*, xxi. 121-123. " In quel loco " refers to Fonte Avellana.

[3] Cf. Corazzini, *Lettere edite ed inedite di Giovanni Boccaccio* (Firenze, 1877), p. 307.

was of the Onesti he built there a new and a larger church, it is said in fulfilment of a vow made, as was Galla Placidia's, in a storm at sea. It is this church which in great part we still see, with additions of the thirteenth century, a lonely and beautiful thing in the emptiness of the sodden fields to the south-east of Ravenna between the Canale del Molino and the Fiumi Uniti.

The lonely and melancholy church of S. Maria in Porto fuori is a basilica consisting of three naves which formed a part of the original church of the Blessed Pietro, and a presbytery, apse, and chapels which are of the thirteenth century. There we see some frescoes of a very beautiful and early character which have been erroneously attributed to Giotto, and as erroneously it might seem to Peter of Rimini.

INTERIOR OF S. MARIA IN PORTO FUORI

They were the gift of a certain Graziadeo, a notary who in 1246 provided the cost of the work, which was carried out it would seem by Maso da Faenza (1314), Rastello da Forlì (1350-60), Giovanni da Ravenna (1368-96), and other painters of the Romagnuol school.[1] These works, which are among the loveliest we have of the school, may be noted as follows: in the nave to the left we see the Madonna and Child with four saints; here, too, is S. Julian. Upon the triumphal arch we see in the midst the Saviour and on the one side Antichrist and

[1] Cf. Dr. Ricci, *Guida di Ravenna* (Bologna, fourth edition), and see Anselmi, *Memorie del Pittore Trecentista Petrus da Rimini* in *La Romagna* (1906), vol. iii. fasc. Settembre.

the martyrdom of the saints, on the other the defeat and end of Antichrist who is beheaded by angels. Beneath are scenes of Paradise and Hell. On the roof of the choir we see the Evangelists with their symbols and the Doctors of the Church. Upon the right the Death, Assumption, and Coronation of the Blessed Virgin, together with the Massacre of the Innocents and the Last Supper and perhaps S. Francis and S. Clare. Upon the left we have the Birth and Presentation of the Blessed Virgin in the Temple. The last two figures upon the right here are said to be portraits of Giotto and Guido da Polenta by those who attribute these works to the Florentine master. In the chapel on the left we see pope John I. before Theodoric, pope John in prison, and in the lunette the martyrdom of a saint. Close by are other frescoes repainted of S. Apollinaris and S. Antony Abbot. In the chapel on the right we see perhaps S. John baptising a king, S. John preaching, and Blessed Pietro *Il Peccatore* healing the blind and sick. Here too would appear to be scenes from the life of S. Matthew, but unhappily the subjects are all of them obscure and difficult to interpret. At the end of the apse we see the three Maries at the Sepulchre and the Incredulity of S. Thomas.

Of these majestic but spoilt works undoubtedly the noblest in design is that of the Death of the Blessed Virgin. The Last Supper is also exceedingly beautiful, and the Incredulity of S. Thomas is a splendid piece of work. But in the course of ages these latter works especially have suffered grievously, as of course has the whole church.

Built in the marsh it has sunk so deeply into it that its pillars are covered half way up, and the church seems always about to be wholly engulfed. It was called S. Maria in Porto because it was originally built near to the famous Port that Augustus Cæsar had established and which for so long was the headquarters of the eastern fleet. In the sixteenth century when the Canons Regular of the Lateran, who then served it, were compelled to abandon it, they built within the

city of Ravenna another church which they named after that they had left, S. Maria in Porto. Thereafter the old church without the walls was known as S. Maria in Porto fuori.

The mighty tower which rises beside S. Maria in Porto fuori has been thought to be in part the famous Pharos of which Pliny speaks.[1] It is almost certainly founded upon it, but the lower part in its huge strength is, as we see it, a work of the end of the twelfth century, as is the lofty campanile which rises from it.

S. Maria in Porto fuori is undoubtedly the greatest monument that remains to Ravenna of the Middle Age; nothing really comparable with it is to be found in the city itself.

The earliest of the friars' churches, those great monuments of the Middle Age in Italy, is S. Chiara which with its convent is now suppressed and lost in the Recovero di Mendicità (Corso Garibaldi, 19). This convent, which dates certainly from 1255, was founded by Chiara da Polenta and was rebuilt in 1794. It is from its garden that we get our best idea of the church which within possesses frescoes of the Romagnuol school, where in the vault we see the four Evangelists with their symbols and the four Doctors of the Church. Upon the walls we see a spoiled fresco of the Presepio, that peculiarly Franciscan subject, and again the Annunciation, the Adoration of the Magi, the Baptism of Our Lord, Christ in the Garden, the Crucifixion, and various saints. These frescoes are the work of the men who painted in S. Maria in Porto fuori.

It cannot have been much later that the church of S. Pier Maggiore, of which I have already spoken,[2] came into Franciscan hands, and certainly from 1261 it was called S. Francesco, when the archbishop Filippo Fontana handed it over to the Conventuals who held it till 1810. Its chief mediæval interest lies for us of course in the fact that Dante was buried, probably at his own desire, within its precincts. But there are other things too. Close to the entrance door is a slab of red Verona

[1] See *supra*, p. 24.

[2] See *supra*, pp. 174 *et seq.*

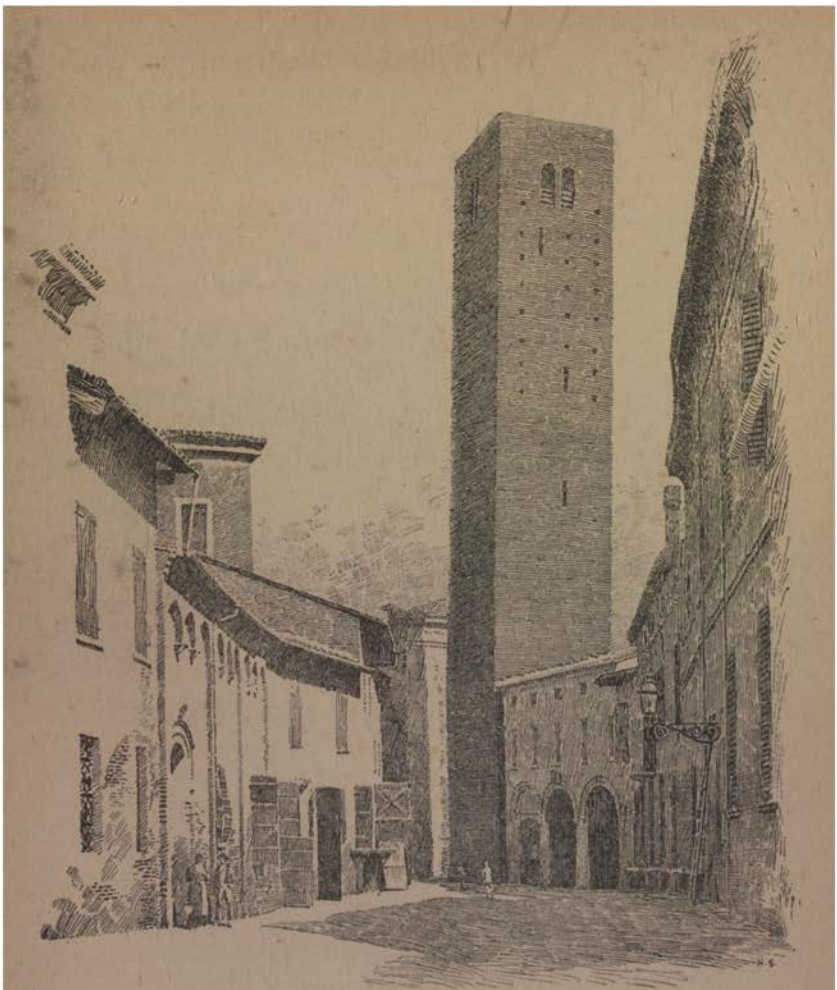
marble dated 1396, which is the tomb of Ostasio da Polenta who was a Tertiary of the Franciscan Order, and was therefore buried in the habit of the friars. The figure carved there in relief to represent Ostasio is evidently a portrait and a very fine and noble piece of work. To the left, again, is another slab of red Verona marble which marks the tomb of the General of the Franciscan Order, Padre Enrico Alfieri, who died of fever in Ravenna in 1405. The fine Renaissance pilasters in the Cappella del Crocefisso should be noted, and the beautiful sixteenth-century monument of Luffo Numai by Tommaso Flamberti at the end of the left aisle.

The Dominicans have not been more fortunate than the Franciscans. Somewhat to the north of the Piazza Venti Settembre in the Via Cavour we find their church S. Domenico. It is said that originally there stood here a Byzantine church dedicated in honour of S. Maria Callopes, but this Dr. Ricci denies. S. Domenico was built from its foundations it seems in October 1269 for the Dominicans and was enlarged in 1374 according to an inscription in the sacristy; but it was almost entirely rebuilt in the beginning of the eighteenth century. The façade and the side portico are perhaps now the most genuine parts of the church. The chief treasure is, however, not of the Middle Age at all, but of the Renaissance, and consists of four large pictures painted in tempera, probably organ shutters, representing the Annunciation, S. Peter Martyr, and S. Dominic. They are the excellent work of Niccolò Rondinelli the pupil of Giovanni Bellini.[1]

From S. Domenico we pass again to S. Giovanni Evangelista if only to note the beautiful Gothic portal of the fourteenth century, of which I have already spoken,[2] and the spoiled frescoes by Giotto in the vaulting of the fourth chapel on the left. Giotto, according to Vasari, came to Ravenna at the instigation of Dante and painted in S. Francesco, but whatever he may have done there has utterly perished, and there only remains in Ravenna his spoilt work in this little

[1] See *infra*, pp. 267 *et seq.*

[2] See *supra*, pp. 175 *et seq.*



Torre del Comune

chapel in S. Giovanni Evangelista. Here we see in a ceiling divided by two diagonals, at the centre of which the Lamb and Cross are painted on a medallion, the four Evangelists enthroned with their symbols and the four Doctors of the Church, a subject common everywhere and especially so in Ravenna. These works have suffered very greatly from restoration, but they seem indeed to be the work of the master in so far as the design is concerned, all surely that is left after the repaintings that have befallen them.

The mosaic pavements of 1213, representing scenes from the third crusade, in the chapel to the left of the choir should be noted.

We must not leave S. Giovanni Evangelista without a look at the great tower of the eleventh century which overshadows it. It might seem to be contemporary with the greater Torre Comunale in the Via Tredici Giugno as the street is now absurdly named. Nor should any one omit to visit the Casa Polentana near Porta Ursicina and the Casa Traversari in the Via S. Vitale, grand old thirteenth-century houses that speak to us, not certainly of Ravenna's great days, but of a greater day than ours, and one, too, in which the most tragic of Italians wandered up and down these windy ways eating his heart out for Florence. Indeed Dante consumes all our thoughts in mediæval Ravenna.

There is a tale told by Franco Sacchetti that I will set down here, for it expresses what in part we must all feel, and what in the confusion of philosophy at the end of the Middle Age was felt far more keenly by men who visited this strange city.

"Maestro Antonio of Ferrara was a man of very great parts, almost a poet, and as entertaining as a jester, but he was very vicious and sinful. Being in Ravenna during the time that Messer Bernardino of Polenta held the lordship, it chanced that this Messer Antonio, who was a very great gambler, had been gambling one day and had lost nearly all he possessed. Being in despair, he entered the church of the Friars Minor,

where there is the tomb which holds the body of the Florentine poet Dante, and having seen an antique Crucifix half-burned and smoked by the great number of lights placed around it, and finding just then many candles lighted there, he immediately went and took all the tapers and candles which were

PORTAL OF S. GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA

burning there and going to the tomb of Dante he placed them before it saying, 'Take them, for thou art far more worthy of them than it is.' The people beholding this and marvelling greatly said, 'What doth this man?' And they all looked at one another. . . ."

Sacchetti does not answer the question asked by the astonished people of Ravenna, but goes on to tell us of the

lord " who delighted in such things as do all lords." He could not have answered it for he did not know himself what it meant. We are in better case, I think, and know that what that wild and half-blasphemous act meant was that the Renaissance had made an end of the Middle Age here in Ravenna as elsewhere.

XVII

RAVENNA IN THE RENAISSANCE

THE BATTLE OF 1512

WHEN in the year 1438 duke Filippo Maria Visconti of Milan forced Ostasio da Polenta, the fifth of that name, into an alliance and the Venetians thereupon invited him to visit them, Venice had decided for her own safety to annex Ravenna and Ostasio soon learned that the new government had proclaimed itself in his old capital. He, as I have said, presently disappeared, the victim of a mysterious assassination; and Venice governed Ravenna by *provveditori* and *podestà*, as happily and successfully, it might seem, as she governed Venetia and a part of Lombardy. For her doubtless the acquisition of Ravenna was not a very great thing, nor does it seem to have changed in any very great degree the half-stagnant life of the city itself, which, as we may suppose, had for so long ceased to play any great part in the life of Italy, that a change of government there was not of much importance to any one except the Holy See, the true over-lord.

The Holy See, however, had no intention of submitting to the incursion of the republic into its long established territories without a protest. In the war of Ferrara, Venice had come into collision with the pope and had in reality been worsted, though the peace of Bagnolo (1484) gave her Rovigo, the Polesine, and Ravenna. But she had adoped a fatal policy in appealing to the French, a policy which led straight

on to Cambray, which, as we may think, so unfortunately crippled her for ever.

The descent of the French was successful at least in this, that it aroused the cupidity and ambition of the king of Spain and of the emperor. Italy was proved to be any one's prize at Fornovo, and when Louis XII. succeeded Charles VIII. in 1498 and combined in his own person the claim of the French crown to Naples and to Genoa and the Orleans claim to Milan, Venice, instead of being doubly on guard, thought she saw a chance of extending her Lombard dominions. She refused the alliance Sforza offered and promised to assist Louis in return for Cremona and its *contado*. In other words, she committed treason to Italy and thus justified, if anything could justify, the League of Cambray.

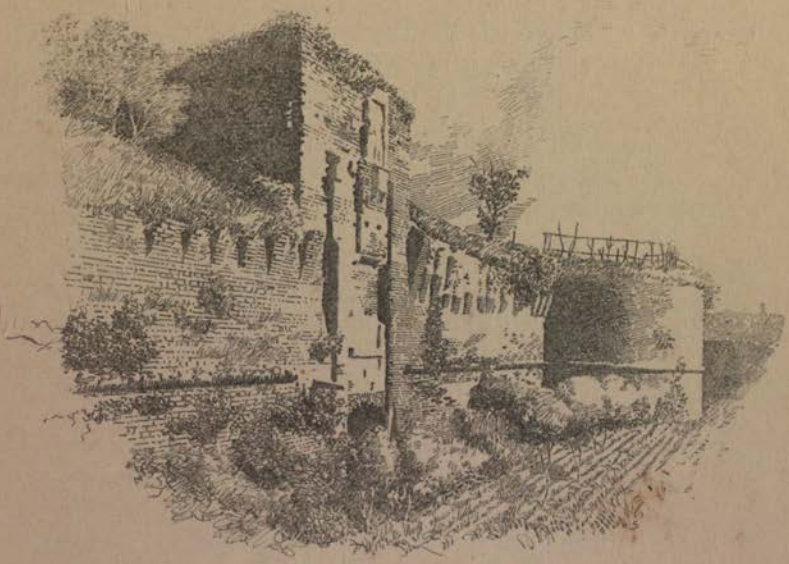
Sforza's first act was to urge the Turk, who needed no invitation, to attack the republic, whose fleet in 1499 was utterly defeated at sea by the Orientals, who presently raided into Friuli. Venice was forced to accept a humiliating peace. It was in these circumstances that, with all Italy alienated from her, the papacy began to act against her.

Its first and most splendid effort to create a reality out of the fiction of the States of the Church was the attempt of Cesare Borgia, who actually made himself master of the whole of the Romagna. Venice watched him with the greatest alarm, but chance saved her, for with the death of Alexander VI., Cesare and his dream came to nothing. Venice acted at once, for indeed even in her decline she was the most splendid force in Italy. She induced by a most swift and masterly stroke the leading cities of the Romagna to place themselves under her protection. It was a great stroke, the last blow of a great and desperate man; that it failed does not make it less to be admired.

The rock which broke the stroke as it fell and shattered the sword which dealt it was Pope Julius II.

Louis and the emperor had come together, and when in June 1508 a truce was made they would have been content

to leave Venice alone; it was the pope who refused, and by the end of the year had formed the European League for the purpose of "putting a stop to losses, injuries, rapine, and damage which Venice had inflicted not merely on the Holy See, but also on the Holy Roman Empire, the House of



ROCCA VENIZIANA

Austria, the Duchy of Milan, the King of Naples and other princes, seizing and tyrannically occupying their territories, cities, and castles as though she were conspiring to the common ill. . . ." So ran the preamble of the League of Cambray. It contemplated among other things the return of Ravenna, Faenza, Rimini, and the rest of the Romagna to the Holy See; Istria, Fruili, Treviso, Padua, Vicenza, and Verona being handed to the emperor; Brescia, Bergamo, Crema, and

Cremona passing to France, and the sea-coast towns in Apulia to the king of Spain; Dalmatia was to go to the king of Hungary and Cyprus to the duke of Savoy.

In the spring of 1507, Julius launched his bull of excommunication against Venice; Ravenna, which was held by the podestà Marcello and by Zeno, was attacked by the pope's general, the duke of Urbino, and after the disastrous defeat of the Venetians by the French and Milanese, at Aguadello, on the Adda, the republic ordered the restoration of Ravenna to the Holy See, together with the other cities of the Romagna.

The pope was now content, but France and the emperor were not, and Venice was forced to ally herself first with one side and then with the other.

In the brutal struggle of the foreigner for Cisalpine Gaul there were two desperate battles, that of Ravenna in 1512, in which the French, though victorious, lost their best leader, Gaston de Foix, and that of Novara in 1513, which induced the French to leave Italy. As the first of these battles concerns Ravenna we must consider it more closely.

At this time Venice was in alliance with Spain and the pope against the French, who were commanded by Gaston de Foix, Duke of Nemours, a nephew of the French king. The combined Spanish and papal troops, about 20,000 strong, were led by Raimondo da Cardona. The French were south of the Apennines when the Papal-Spanish force swung round from Milan into the Ferrarese, seized the territory south of the Po, and laid siege to Bologna. A Venetian force was hurrying to aid them.

Gaston de Foix did not hesitate. On February 5, he flung himself over the ice-bound Apennine and hastened to relieve Bologna. Cardona retreated before him down the Æmilian Way; but Brescia opened its gates to the Venetians, and this, which hindered Gaston, so enraged him that when he had taken the city he gave it up to a pillage in which more than eight thousand were slain and his men "were so laden with spoil that they returned to France forthwith to enjoy it."

Gaston was compelled to return to Milan to re-form his troops, for he was determined both by necessity and by his own nature, which loved decision, to force a battle with the allies. The truth was that the position of France was precarious, her career in Italy was deeply threatened by the allies, Henry VIII. of England contemplated a descent upon Normandy, and until the enemy in Italy was disposed of her way was barred to Naples.

So Gaston set out with some 7000 cavalry and 17,000 infantry, French, Italian, German, to pursue and to defeat Cardona, who did not wish to fight. The army of the allies was chiefly Spanish and it numbered some 6000 cavalry and 16,000 infantry of most excellent fighting quality.

As the French advanced along the Via Æmilia, Cardona withdrew to Faenza. Gaston went on to Ravenna, which he besieged. Cardona was forced to intervene and try to save the city. He, too, approached Ravenna. Upon Easter Day, 1512, the two armies met in the marsh between Ravenna and the sea; and, in the words of Guicciardini, "there then began a very great battle, without doubt one of the greatest that Italy had seen for these many years. . . . All the troops were intermingled in a battle fought thus on a plain without impediments such as water or banks, and where both armies fought, each obstinately bent on death or victory, and inflamed not only with danger, glory, and hope, but also with the hatred of nation against nation. It was a memorable spectacle in the hot engagement between the German and Spanish infantry to see two very noted officers, Jacopo Empser, a German, and Zamudio, a Spaniard, advance before their battalions and encounter one another as if it were by challenge, in which combat the Spaniard went off conqueror by killing his adversary. The cavalry of the army of the League was not at best equal to that of the French, and having been shattered and torn by the artillery was become much inferior. Wherefore after they had sustained for some time, more by stoutness of heart than by strength of arms, the fury of

the enemy, Yves d'Allegre with the rearguard and a thousand foot that were left at the Montone under Paliose and now recalled charging them in flank, and Fabrizio Colonna, fighting valiantly, being taken prisoner by the soldiers of the Duke of Ferrara, they turned their backs, in which they did no more than follow the example of their generals; for the Viceroy and Carvagiale, without making the utmost proof of the valour of their troops, betook themselves to flight, carrying off with them the third division or rearguard, almost entire with Antonio da Leva, a man of that time of low rank though afterwards by a continual exercise of arms for many years, rising through all the military degrees, he became a very famous general. The whole body of light horse had been already broken, and the Marchese di Pescara, their commander, taken prisoner, covered with blood and wounds. And the Marchese della Palude, who had led up the second division, or main battle, through a field full of ditches and brambles in great disorder to the fight, was also taken. The ground was covered with dead men and horses, and yet the Spanish infantry, though abandoned by the horse, continued fighting with incredible fierceness; and though, at the first encounter with the German foot, they had received some damage from the firm and close order of the pikes, yet afterwards getting their enemies within the length of their swords, and many of them, covered with targets, pushing with daggers between the legs of the Germans, they had penetrated with very great slaughter almost to the centre of their battalions. The Gascon foot who were posted by the Germans on the ground between the river and a rising bank had attacked the Italian infantry, which, though they had greatly suffered by the artillery, would have repulsed them highly to their honour, had not Yves d'Allegre entered among them with a squadron of horse. But the fortune of that general did not answer his valour, for his son Viverais being almost immediately killed before his eyes, the father, unwilling to survive so great a loss, threw himself with his horse into the thickest of the enemies, where,

fighting like a most valiant captain and killing several, he was at last cut to pieces. The Italian foot, unable to resist so great a multitude, gave way; but part of the Spanish infantry hastening to support them, they rallied. On the other side, the German infantry, being sorely pressed by the other part of the Spaniards, were hardly capable of making any resistance; but the cavalry of the confederates being all fled out of the field, Foix with a great body of horse turned to fall upon them. The Spaniards, therefore, rather retiring than driven out of the field, without the least disorder in their ranks, took their way between the river and the bank, marching slowly and with a close front, by the strength of which they beat off the French and began to disengage themselves; at which time Navarre, choosing rather to die than to save himself, and therefore refusing to leave the field, was made a prisoner. But Foix, thinking it intolerable that this Spanish infantry should march off in battle array like conquerors and knowing that the victory was not perfect if these were not broken and dispersed like the rest, went furiously to attack them with a squadron of horse and did execution upon the hindmost; but being surrounded and thrown from his horse, or, as some say, his horse falling upon him while he was fighting, he received a mortal thrust with a pike in his side. And if it be desirable, as it is believed, for a man to die in the height of his prosperity, it is certain that he met with a most happy death in dying after he had obtained so great a victory. He died very young, but famous through the world, having in less than three months, and being a general almost before he was a soldier, with incredible ardour and expedition obtained so many victories. Near him lay on the ground for dead Lautrec, having received twenty wounds; but being carried to Ferrara he was by diligent care of the surgeons recovered.

" By the death of Foix, the Spanish infantry were suffered to pass off unmolested, the remainder of the army being already dispersed and put to flight, and the baggage, colours, and cannons taken. The pope's legate was also taken by the

Stradiotti and carried to Federigo da Bozzolo, who made a present of him to the legate of the council. There were taken also Fabrizio Colonna, Pietro Navarra, the Marchese della Palude, the Marchese di Bitonto, and the Marchese di Pescara, with many other lords, barons, and honourable gentlemen, Spaniards and Neapolitans. Nothing is more uncertain than the number of the killed in battles; but amidst the variety of accounts it is the most common opinion that there died of both armies at least 10,000, of which a third was of the French and two-thirds of their enemies: some talk of many more, but they were without question almost all of them of the most valiant and choice soldiers, among whom, belonging to the papal forces, was Raffaello de' Pazzi, an officer of high reputation; and great numbers were wounded. But in this respect the loss of the conqueror was without comparison much the greater by the death of Foix, Yves d'Allegre, and many of the French nobility, and many other brave officers of the German infantry, by whose valour, though at vast expense of their blood, the victory was in a great measure acquired. Molard also fell with many other officers of the Gascons and Picards, which nation lost all their glory that day among the French. But their loss was exceeded by the death of Foix, with whom perished the very sinews and spirits of that army. Of the vanquished that escaped out of the field of battle the greater part fled towards Cesena, whence they continued their flight to more distant places; nor did the Viceroy stop till he came to Ancona where he arrived with a very few horse. Many were stripped and murdered in their flight; for the peasants scoured all the roads and the Duke of Urbino, who from his sending some time before Baldassare da Castiglione to the King of France, and employing some trusty persons as his agents with Foix, was supposed to have entered into a private agreement against his uncle, not only raised the country against those that fled, but sent his soldiers to intercept them in the territories of Pesaro; so that only those who took their flight through the dominions of the Florentines were by orders of the magis-

trates, confirmed by the republic, suffered to pass unmolested.

"The victorious army was no sooner returned to camp than the people of Ravenna sent deputies to treat of surrendering their city; but when they had agreed or were upon the point of agreement, and the inhabitants being employed in preparing provisions to be sent to the camp were negligent in guarding the walls, the German and Gascon foot entered through the breach that had been made and plundered the town in a most barbarous manner, their cruelty being exasperated not only by their natural hatred to the name of the Italians, but by a spirit of revenge for the loss they had sustained in the battle. On the fourth day after this, Marcantonio Colonna gave up the citadel, into which he had retired, on condition of safety to their persons and effects, but obliging himself on the other hand, together with the rest of the officers, not to bear arms against the King of France nor the Pisan Council till the next festival of S. Mary Magdalen; and not many days after, Bishop Vitello, who commanded in the castle with a hundred and fifty men, agreed to surrender it on terms of safety for life and goods. The cities of Imola, Forlì, Cesena, and Rimini, and all the castles of the Romagna, except those of Forlì and Imola, followed the fortune of the victory and were received by the legate in the name of the council."

The site of this great battle is marked by a monument, a square pilaster of marble, called the Colonna dei Francesi, adorned with bas-reliefs and inscriptions, raised in 1557 by the President of the Romagna, Pier Donato Cesi, on the right bank of the Ronco, some three miles from the city. We may recall Ariosto's verses:

"Io venni dove le campagne rosse
eran del sangue barbaro e latino
che fiera stella dianzi a furor mosse.

"E vidi un morto all' altro sì vicino
che, senza premer lor, quasi il terreno
a molte miglia non dava il cammino.

" E da chi alberga fra Garonna e Reno
vidi uscir crudeltà, che ne dovria
tutto il mondo d'orror rimaner pieno."

The League of Cambray had succeeded in breaking the real security and confidence of Venice; the death of Gaston de Foix, " the hero boy who died too soon," destroyed the energy of her ally, the French army, in Italy; and the battle of Novara, as I have said, in 1513, inducing that ally to withdraw from the peninsula, left the republic to be menaced by Cardona, who failed only to take Venice itself.

Nor was that great government more fortunate in the long struggles which followed between Francis I. and Charles V. In 1523, seeing that the French were failing, Venice came to terms with the emperor, by that time the real arbiter of Italy. In 1527, though then in alliance with pope Clement VII., she seized once more Ravenna and the Romagna, but the emperor intervened, and by the peace of Cambray in 1529, which on payment of a fine confirmed Venice in her Lombard possessions as far as the Adda, she was compelled to restore Ravenna and the Romagna to the pope.

The treaty of Cambray had so far as Ravenna was concerned a certain finality about it. Thenceforth the popes ruled the city through a cardinal legate, and an era of a certain social and artistic splendour began; the city was adorned with at least one new church, S. Maria in Porto, with many monuments and palaces, and some great public works were undertaken.

So Ravenna in the arms of the Church slumbered till, in 1797, the great soldier of the Revolution descended upon Italy in that marvellous campaign which so closely recalls the achievement of Cæsar. Ravenna then became a part first of the Cispadan and later of the Cisalpine republic. Then, as we know, came the Austrians who took Ravenna from the French, but were in their turn expelled in 1800, when the city was incorporated into the short-lived kingdom of Italy. But it was again attacked by the Austrians, and later restored

once again to the pope. A period of uncertainty and confusion followed in which various provisional governments were established for Ravenna, but at last in 1860 the city and its province were, by a vote of the people, included in the kingdom of United Italy.

MONUMENT OF GASTON DE FOIX

XVIII

RENAISSANCE RAVENNA

CHURCHES AND PALACES

THE period of the Renaissance which saw the papal government re-established in Ravenna in 1529, has left its mark upon the city in many a fine monument, indelibly stamped with the style of that fruitful period. Among such monuments we must note the beautiful tombs of Guidarello Guidarelli, by Tullio Lombardi, erected in 1557, now in the Accademia, and of Luffo Numai by Tommaso Flamberti in S. Francesco, erected about fifty years earlier (1509). Above all, however, must be named the great church of S. Maria in Porto (1553) and the palaces of Minzoni, Graziani, and others, with the Loggia del Giardino at S. Maria in Porto. And there is, too, the work of the painters Niccolò Rondinelli, Cotignola, Luca Longhi and his sons, Guido Reni, and others.

Later the papal government undertook many great public works. The Venetians had, as we shall see, re-fortified Ravenna; these fortifications the papal government enlarged, and in the middle of the seventeenth century undertook the digging and construction of the Canale Pamfilio, so named in honour of Innocent X., and in the following century of the Canale Corsini. These works were necessary, it is said, not only for the maritime commerce of the city, which one may think was scarcely large enough to have excused them, but

for the preservation of Ravenna from inundation consequent upon the silting up of the rivers.

But the earliest work done in Ravenna after the close of the Middle Age was that undertaken by the Venetians. It was in 1457 that they began to build the really tremendous fortification or Rocca, the ruins of which we may still see. They were engaged during some ten years upon this great fortress, the master of the works being Giovanni Francesco da Massa. They employed as material the ruins of the church of S. Andrea dei Goti, built by Theodoric, which they had been compelled to destroy to make room for the fortress, as well as the materials of a palace of the Polentani. The Rocca with its great citadel played a considerable part in the battle of 1512, and the subsequent sack of the city. But when Ravenna came again into the government of the Holy See, though the fortifications of the city as a whole were enlarged, the Rocca itself soon fell into a decay and was indeed in great part destroyed in the middle of the seventeenth century, the monastery and the church of Classe being repaired and enlarged with its ruins and the Ponte Nuovo over the Fiumi Uniti, according to Dr. Ricci, being also constructed from its remains, as were other buildings in Ravenna. Then like the Rocca Malatestiana at Rimini it came to be used as a mere prison, and when it failed to prove useful for that purpose it was allowed to become the picturesque ruin we see.

Upon the Torre del Ponte of old were set two great reliefs; on high the Madonna and Child and beneath the Lion of S. Mark. The Madonna and Child, a mediocre work, remains, but when Venice was turned out of Ravenna the Lion was taken down and behind it were carved the papal arms. Both Madonna and Lion would seem to have been the work of Marino di Marco Ceprini.

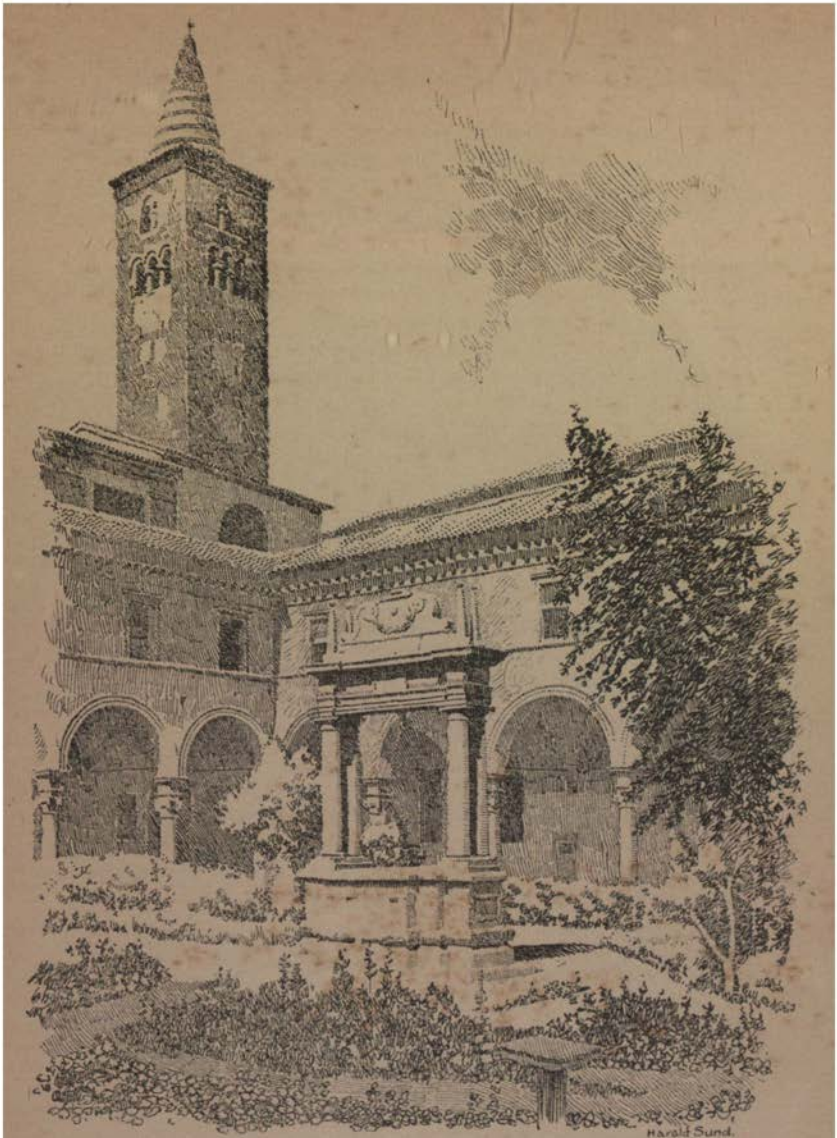
Another work undertaken and achieved by the Venetians was the enlargement and the adornment of the Piazza Maggiore. There in 1483, when their work was finished, they raised two columns which still stand before the Palazzo del

Comune. They stand upon circular bases in three tiers, sculptured in relief by Pietro Lombardi with the signs of the Zodiac and other symbols and ornaments. The capitals of both the columns are beautiful. Upon the northern column of old stood a statue of S. Apollinaris, the true patron of the city, while upon the southern column stood the Lion of S. Mark. But when in 1509 Ravenna came into the hands of Julius II. the Lion was removed and in 1640 the statue of S. Apollinaris from the northern column took its place, while there, where of old S. Apollinaris had stood, a statue of S. Vitalis was set as we see to-day. The Palazzo del Comune was entirely reconstructed in 1681, while the Palazzo Governativo was built in 1696 by the Cardinal Legate Francesco Barberini and the Orologio Pubblico, originally dating from 1483, was transformed, as we see it, in 1785. Of the Portico Antico I have already spoken.[1]

One of the most interesting and accessible fifteenth-century houses in Ravenna is to be found in the Albergo del Cappello, with its fine original windows in the Via Rattazzi, not far from S. Domenico; it may stand as an example of many other old houses in the Via Arcivescovado, but I must especially name that beautiful Venetian house in the Via Ponte Marino—it is No. 15—the Casa Graziani with its lovely balcony, the Casa Baldini (Via Mazzini, 31) with its double loggia in the *cortile*, the Casa Fabbri next door (No. 33), the Casa Zirardini (Via Belle Arti, No. 1), the Casa Baronio (Via Romolo Gessi, Nos. 6 and 16), and the Casa Ghigi with its lovely door and portico (No. 7 of the same street).

Undoubtedly the greatest monument which the sixteenth century has left us in Ravenna is the church of S. Maria in Porto. This was built by the Canons Regular of the Lateran, the most ancient community of canons still extant, in the year 1553, when for about fifty years they had been compelled to abandon the church of S. Maria in Porto fuori outside the city, in the marsh. They not only furnished

[1] See *supra*, p. 192.



THE CLOISTER OF S. GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA

their new church, but to a considerable extent built it, out of the materials of S. Lorenzo in Cesarea, which they thus destroyed.

S. Maria in Porto as we see it has suffered from restoration, and the façade is a work of the eighteenth century, but the church itself remains a noble sixteenth-century building divided within into three naves by huge pilasters and columns and covered at the crossing with a great octagonal cupola. There is, however, little that is very precious to be seen, a few fine marbles and the beautiful marble relief of the Madonna in prayer in the transept, called the Madonna Greca, a Byzantine work probably brought to Ravenna, according to Dr. Ricci, at the time of the crusades. It was originally in S. Maria in Porto fuori. The noble choir should also be noticed and the beautiful ciborio.

Close by the church is the Monastero of the Canons, within which there remains the lovely cloister which should be compared with those at S. Vitale and S. Giovanni Evangelista of the same period. This of S. Maria in Porto, however, is the finest, having doubled storied logge. Above all the exquisite Loggia del Giardino should not be missed. It was built in 1508, and looks on to a piece of the sixth-century wall of Ravenna.

Not far away in the Via Girotto Guaccimanni near the Hotel Byron is the church of S. Maria delle Croci, founded in the tenth century, but entirely rebuilt in the sixteenth. The rose in terracotta of the façade is a work of this time, as is the exquisite baldacchino over the high altar within, upheld by two pilasters and two columns of Greek marble. The picture, too, of the Assumption over the altar is by a master, perhaps Gaspare Sacchi of Imola, of the sixteenth century. Of the same period is the massive Porta Serrata at the north end of the Corso Garibaldi.

The best monument of later times left in Ravenna is the fine Palazzo Rasponi in Via S. Agnese (No. 2) built in or about 1700.

PORTA SERRATA.

XIX

THE GALLERY AND THE MUSEUM

RAVENNA isolated in her marsh and altogether, both geographically and politically, out of the Italian world that began to flower so wonderfully in Tuscany, then in Umbria, and later still in Venice in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, is the last city in which to look for pictures. Nevertheless a few delightful pieces among much that is negligible are to be found in the Accademia delle Belle Arti in the Via Alfredo Baccarini. The collection was begun about 1827, and though what is to be seen there is never of the first importance it is certainly more than we had the right to expect.

The first two rooms upon the upper floor are devoted to the Romagnuol and Bolognese painters, the best of them here pupils or disciples of the one master Ravenna can boast, Niccolò Rondinelli.

We have seen Rondinelli's organ shutters in S. Domenico, here we have something better. This really fine pupil of Giovanni Bellini was born it seems in Ravenna in the middle of the fifteenth century. Vasari tells us that "there also flourished in Romagna an excellent painter called Rondinello. . . . Giovanni Bellini, whose disciple he had been, had availed himself to a considerable extent of his services in various works. But after Rondinello had left Giovanni Bellini he continued to practise his art and in such a manner

that, being exceedingly diligent, he produced numerous works which are highly deserving of and have obtained considerable praise. . . . For the altar of S. Maria Maddalena in the cathedral of Ravenna this master painted a picture in oil, wherein he portrayed the figure of that saint only; but in the predella he executed three stories, the small figures of which are very gracefully depicted. In one of these is our Saviour Christ appearing to Mary Magdalen in the form of the gardener; another shows S. Peter leaving the ship and walking upon the waves of the sea, and between them is the Baptism of Christ. All these representations are executed in an exceedingly beautiful manner.[1] Rondinello likewise painted two pictures in the church of S. Giovanni Evangelista in the same city. One of these portrays the Consecration of the church by S. Giovanni[2] and the other exhibits three martyrs, S. Cancio, S. Canciano, and S. Cancianilla, all very beautiful figures.[3] For the church of S. Apollinare also in Ravenna this master painted two pictures, each containing a single figure, S. Giovanni Battista and S. Sebastiano, namely, both highly extolled.[4] There is a picture by the hand of Rondinello in the church of S. Spirito likewise; the subject, Our Lady between S. Jerome and the virgin martyr S. Catherine.[5] In S. Francesco, Rondinello painted two pictures, in one of which are S. Catherine and S. Francesco; while in the other our artist depicted the Madonna accompanied by many figures, as well as by the apostle S. James and by S. Francesco.[6] For the church of S. Domenico, Rondinello painted two pictures; one is to the left of the high altar and exhibits Our Lady with numerous figures; the other is on the façade of the church

[1] This picture would seem to be lost.
[2] This picture is now in the Brera at Milan, No. 452.
[3] This picture would seem to be lost. Milanesi says it was taken to Milan. *Vas.* v. 254, n. 2.
[4] There is a Sebastian by this master in the Duomo at Forli; the S. Giovanni panel seems to be lost.
[5] This is now in the Accademia of Ravenna, No. 6.
[6] This would seem to have disappeared; but cf. Brera, 455.

and is very beautiful.[1] In the church of S. Niccolò, a monastery of Augustinians, this master painted a picture with S. Lorenzo and S. Francesco, a work which was most highly commended, in so much that it caused Rondinello to be held in the utmost esteem for the remainder of his life, not in Ravenna only, but in all Romagna.[2] The painter here in question lived to the age of sixty years, and was buried in S. Francesco at Ravenna." [3]

In another place, Vasari tells us that the pupil who copied Giovanni Bellini most closely and did him most honour was " Rondinello of Ravenna, of whose aid the master availed himself much in all his works. . . . Rondinello painted his best work for the church of S. Giovanni Battista in Ravenna. The church belongs to the Carmelite Friars and in the painting, besides a figure of Our Lady, Rondinello depicted that of S. Alberto, a brother of their order;[4] the head of the saint is extremely beautiful, and the whole work very highly commended." [5]

Of all the works thus named by Vasari as painted by Rondinelli in Ravenna only four remain, three in the Accademia and one in S. Domenico. I have already spoken of the tempera pieces in S. Domenico.[6] Of the three pieces in the Accademia, the Madonna and Child between S. Catherine and S. Jerome (No. 6) comes from S. Spirito; the Madonna and Child between SS. Catherine, Mary Magdalen, John Baptist, and Thomas Aquinas comes from S. Domenico, and is, I am convinced, the picture spoken of by Vasari rather than the sixteenth-century work that still hangs there, which is, according to Dr. Ricci, perhaps the mediocre work of Ragazzini. The third picture by Rondinelli in the Accademia, the Madonna

[1] The first of these remains in S. Domenico, the other is, I think, now in the Accademia, No. 7.

[2] This picture, too, seems to be lost.

[3] Vasari (trs. Foster), vol. iii. pp. 382-384.

[4] Now in the Accademia, unnumbered; it represents the Madonna between S. Alberto and S. Sebastian.

[5] Vasari (trs. Foster), vol. ii. pp. 171-172.

[6] See *supra*, p. 246.

and Child between S. Alberto and S. Sebastian, comes from the church of the Carmelites, S. Giovanni Battista.

Beside these three fine works of Rondinelli hangs the work of a man he strongly influenced, Francesco Zaganelli da Cotignola. When Vasari tells us that Rondinelli was buried in S. Francesco at Ravenna, he goes on to say that "after him came Francesco da Cotignola, who was also greatly esteemed in that city and painted numerous pictures there. On the high altar of the church which belongs to the Abbey of Classe, for example, there is one from his hand of tolerably large size, representing the Raising of Lazarus with many figures.[1] Opposite to this work in the year 1548 Giorgio Vasari painted another for Don Romualdo da Verona, the abbot of that place. This represents a Deposition of Christ from the Cross, and has also a large number of figures.[2] Francesco Cotignola painted a picture in S. Niccolò, likewise a very large one, the subject of which is the Birth of Christ, with two in S. Sebastiano exhibiting numerous figures.[3] For the hospital of S. Caterina, Francesco painted a picture of Our Lady, S. Caterina, and many other figures;[4] and in S. Agata, he painted a figure of our Saviour Christ on the Cross, the Madonna being at the foot thereof, with a considerable number of other figures; this work also has received commendation.[5] In the church of S. Apollinare in the same city are three pictures by this artist, one at the high altar with Our Lady, S. Giovanni Battista, S. Apollinare, S. Jerome, and other saints; in the second is also the Madonna with S. Peter and S. Catherine;[6] and in the third and last is Jesus Christ bearing his Cross, but this Francesco could not finish having been overtaken by death before its completion.[7] Francesco coloured in a very

[1] This is in the ex-church of S. Romuald in Classe in the sacristy, now part of the Museo.

[2] This is now in the Accademia, No. 40.

[3] The first of these is in the Accademia (No. 10), as I suppose are the two other undescribed pictures.

[4] Is this a Marriage of S. Catherine in S. Girolamo in Ravenna?

[5] Now in the Accademia, No. 13. [6] Of these I know nothing.

[7] Now in the canonica of S. Croce in Ravenna.

pleasing manner, but had not such power of design as Rondinello; he was nevertheless held in great account by the people of Ravenna. It was his desire to be buried in S. Apollinare, where he had painted certain figures, as we have said, wishing that in the place where he had lived and laboured his remains might find their repose after his death."

To-day in Ravenna there remain the three works described by Vasari, one in the ex-church S. Romualdo di Classe, the other, as I think, once in the Hospital of S. Catherine and now in S. Girolamo, and another at S. Croce. In the Accademia there are nine of his works, of which the S. Niccolò Presepio (No. 10) and the S. Agata Crucifixion (No. 13) are the better. A S. Sebastian (No. 12) and a S. Catherine (No. 11) should also be noticed. By his brother and assistant, Bernardino, there is one picture in the Accademia, the Agony in the Garden (No. 194).

Another master of the Romagnuol school, Marco Palmezzano, the pupil of Melozza da Forlì, a contemporary of Rondinelli, who influenced him to some small extent, is represented in the Accademia by two works in Sala II., the Nativity and the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin (Nos. 189 and 190); in the Vescovado there is a Madonna and Child with four saints from his hand. Vasari says nothing of him, but only mentions his name, yet he has a good deal to tell us of perhaps a lesser man, Luca Longhi (1507-1580), who was born in Ravenna.

"Maestro Luca de' Longhi of Ravenna," he says, "a man of studious habits and quiet reserved character, has painted many beautiful pictures in oil, with numerous portraits from the life in his native city and its neighbourhood. Among other productions of Longhi are two sufficiently graceful little pictures which the reverend Don Antonio da Pisa, then abbot of the monastery, caused him to paint no long time since for the monks of Classe; many other works have also been executed by this painter. It is certain that Luca Longhi, being studious, diligent, and of admirable judgment as he is, would have become an excellent master had he not always confined himself

to Ravenna where he still remains with his family; his works are accomplished with much patience and study; and of this I can bear testimony since I know the progress which he made during the time of my stay in Ravenna both in the practise and comprehension of art. Nor will I omit to mention that a daughter of his, called Barbara, still but a little child, draws very well and has begun to paint also in a very good manner and with much grace."

There are five pictures by Luca Longhi in the Accademia besides three portraits. In Sala I. we have an early work painted at the age of twenty-two, the Marriage of S. Catherine (No. 14); a Madonna and Child with S. Benedict, S. Apollinaris, S. Barbara, and S. Paul (No. 23). In Sala II. the Dead Christ between S. Bartholomew and Don Antonio da Pisa, abbot of the monastery of Classe (No. 17), and two pictures of the Adoration of the Shepherds (Nos. 15, 16). Here, too, are the three portraits from his hand which represent Raffaele Rasponi (No. 22), Giovanni Arrigoni (No. 21), and Girolamo Rossi (No. 20). By Luca's son Francesco there is a feeble Crucifixion (No. 29) in Sala I.;[1] and happily in Sala II. three pictures by Barbara, Luca's daughter, of whom Vasari speaks; a S. Catherine, which is really a portrait of the painter (No. 81), a Madonna and Child (No. 27), and a Judith (No. 28).[2]

Only one picture by a Bolognese master is really worthy of much notice here; I mean the S. Romuald of Guercino (No. 33) in Sala I. In the floor of this first room there is set a fine mosaic from S. Apollinare in Classe which should be noted.

The third room in the Accademia, filled with various works of little merit of the sundry schools of Italy, may be neglected. The fourth room, however, is devoted to the beautiful tomb

[1] There is another work, an Annunciation, by Francesco Longhi in S. Croce.

[2] Another work by Barbara Longhi, S. Peter visiting S. Agata in Prison, may be seen in S. Maria Maggiore.

of Guidarello Guidarelli, the very glorious work of Tullio Lombardi. Of old this exquisite tomb stood in the Cappella Braccioforte at S. Francesco. Guidarello of Ravenna was killed in battle at Imola in 1501, and Tullio Lombardi, the son of Pietro, was employed to make his tomb. "I doubt," says M. de Vogüé, "whether, apart from the work of Donatello, the early Renaissance produced anything more beautiful." Guidarello the knight is represented in marble, a life-size figure, lying on his back, his body encased in armour, his helmet on his head, his visor raised, his gloved hands crossed over his sword which lies along his body. He seems, weary of fighting at last, to be sleeping, but the sweet expression upon the tired face makes us think rather of a monk than a soldier. In truth he was a knight of the olden time.

We leave the room in which he sleeps for ever in his marble, reluctantly, and, passing Sala V., which is full of late pictures of no interest, come to Sala VI. where there are several delightful early Italian works. One would not certainly expect to find in Ravenna a picture of the most exquisite school in Tuscany, the school of Siena. Yet here is a delightful Madonna and Child with S. Peter and S. Barbara (No. 191) by Matteo di Giovanni (1435-1495); and a fourteenth-century Annunciation (No. 176) from Tuscany. In the Crucifixion (No. 225) we seem to have an early Venetian work, and another Crucifixion (No. 181) might almost be from the hand of Lorenzo Monaco. It is probable that we see a work of Antonio da Fabriano in the S. Peter Damiano (No. 188), and certainly an Umbrian work in the S. Francis receiving the Stigmata (216). But the most remarkable Umbrian picture here is the Christ with the Cross between two angels (No. 202), the work of Niccolò da Foligno. A few early works by the mediocre masters of the Romagnuol school (Nos. 174, 171, 172, 182) are to be seen here also.

Sala VI. is entirely devoted to an immense number of pictures in the Byzantine manner, of considerable interest and much beauty, but not yet to be discussed.

We leave the Accademia for the Museo close by. The building in which the collections are housed is the old Camaldulensian monastery of Classe built in 1515 by the monks of S. Apollinare in Classe, and since S. Romuald, the founder of the order, was a Ravennese one may think the monastery might have been left in the hands of the monks. Even as it is it has considerably more interest for us than the collections gathered within it. The beautiful seventeenth-century cloisters, the old convent church of S. Romualdo in the baroque style of 1630, and the convent itself are delightful. The collections are mediocre. But here we may see all that is to be seen of the Ravenna of Augustus and of the great years of the empire, fragments and inscriptions and reliefs now and then of real interest, as in the relief representing the Apotheosis of Augustus, in the eastern walk of the cloisters, and in the remains of that suit of gold armour thought to be Theodoric's in the old sacristy. But for the most part the collection is without much attraction, yet certainly not to remain unvisited.

THE PINETA

XX

THE PINETA

RAVENNA has so much that is rare and precious to show us that few among the many who spend a day or two within her walls have the inclination to explore the melancholy marshes in which she stands. No doubt most of us drive out to S. Apollinare in Classe, but the road thither does not encourage a further journey, for it is rude and rough and the country over which it passes is among the most featureless in Italy. Nevertheless he does himself a wrong who leaves Ravenna for good without having spent one day at any rate in the Pineta which, ruined though it now be, is still one of the loveliest and most mysterious places in the Romagna.

But lovely though it is, and full of memories, what can be said of this vast ruined forest of stone pines with its mystery of mere and fen, its coolness and shadow, its astonishing silence? Only this I think, that if once you find it, nothing else in Ravenna will seem half so precious as this green wood. You will love it always and for its own sake more than anything else in Ravenna, and in this you will not be alone; every one who has come to it these thousand years has felt

the same, Dante, Boccaccio, Byron, Carducci, the Pineta knows the footsteps of them all and they seem to haunt it still.

Dante would seem to have loved it best in the morning; out of it he conjures his *Paradiso Terrestre* in the twenty-eighth canto of the *Purgatorio:*

" Through that celestial forest, whose thick shade
With lively greenness the new-springing day
Attemper'd, eager now to roam, and search
Its limits round, forthwith I left the bank;
Along the champain leisurely my way
Pursuing, o'er the ground, that on all sides
Delicious odour breathed. A pleasant air
That intermitted never, never veer'd,
Smote on my temples, gently as a wind
Of softest influence; at which the sprays,
Obedient all, lean'd trembling to that part
Where first the holy mountain casts his shade;
Yet were not so disordered, but that still
Upon their top the feathered quiristers
Applied their wonted art, and with full joy
Welcomed those hours of prime, and warbled shrill
Amid the leaves that to their jocund lays
Kept tenour; even as from branch to branch
Along the piny forests on the shore
Of Chiassi rolls the gathering melody
When Eolus hath from his cavern loosed
The dripping south. Already had my steps,
Though slow, so far into that ancient wood
Transported me, I could not ken the place
Where I had entered; when, behold, my path
Was bounded by a rill which to the left
With little rippling waters bent the grass
That issued from its brink. On earth no wave
How clear so'er that would not seem to have
Some mixture in itself, compared with this
Transpicuous clear; yet darkly on it rolled,
Darkly beneath perpetual gloom, which ne'er
Admits or sun or moon-light there to shine."

Well, is not it the very place? And did not Dante, who knew Italy as few have known it, do well to remember it when he would describe for us the Earthly Paradise? In the forest the morning is sacred to him and there one should

turn, with less misunderstanding than anywhere else, the precious pages of that poem which is in itself a universe.

But if the clear morning there is Dante's, when we may still hear the voice he heard pass by there, in the stillness, singing, *Beati quorum tecta sunt peccata*, the long noon belongs

THE PINETA

to Boccaccio, for it is full of the most tragic and pitiful of his tales.

"Ravenna being a very ancient City in Romania, there dwelt sometime a great number of worthy Gentlemen, among whom I am to speake of one more especially, named Anastasio, descended from the Family of the Honesti, who by the death of his Father, and an Unckle of his, was left extraordinarily abounding in riches, and growing to yeares fitting for marriage, (as young Gallants are easily apt enough to do) he became enamored of a very bountifull Gentlewoman, who was Daughter to Signior Paulo Traversario, one of the most ancient and noble Families in all the Countrey. Nor made he any doubt,

but by his meanes and industrious endeavour, to derive affection from her againe; for he carried himselfe like a brave-minded Gentleman, liberall in his expences, honest and affable in all his actions, which commonly are the true notes of a good nature, and highly to be commended in any man. But, howsoever Fortune became his enemy, these laudable parts of manhood did not any way friend him, but rather appeared hurtfull to himselfe: so cruell, unkind, and almost meerely savage did she shew her self to him; perhaps in pride of her singular beauty, or presuming on her nobility by birth, both which are rather blemishes, then ornaments in a woman, especially when they be abused.

"The harsh and uncivill usage in her, grew very distastefull to Anastasio, and so unsufferable, that after a long time of fruitlesse service, requited still with nothing but coy disdaine; desperate resolutions entred into his brain, and often he was minded to kill himselfe. But better thoughts supplanting those furious passions, he abstained from any such violent act; and governed by more manly consideration, determined, that as shee hated him, he would requite her with the like, if he could: wherein he became altogether deceived, because as his hopes grew to a dayly decaying, yet his love enlarged it selfe more and more.

"Thus Anastasio persevering still in his bootlesse affection, and his expences not limited within any compasse; it appeared in the judgement of his Kindred and Friends, that he was falne into a mighty consumption, both of his body and meanes. In which respect, many times they advised him to leave the City of Ravenna, and live in some other place for such a while; as might set a more moderate stint upon his spendings, and bridle the indiscreete course of his love, the onely fuell which fed this furious fire.

"Anastasio held out thus a long time, without lending an eare to such friendly counsell: but in the end, he was so neerely followed by them, as being no longer able to deny them, he promised to accomplish their request. Whereupon,

making such extraordinary preparation, as if he were to set thence for France or Spaine, or else into some further distant countrey: he mounted on horsebacke, and accompanied with some few of his familiar friends, departed from Ravenna, and rode to a countrey dwelling house of his owne, about three or foure miles distant from the Cittie, which was called Chiasso, and there (upon a very goodly greene) erecting divers Tents and Pavillions, such as great persons make use of in the time of a Progresse: he said to his friends, which came with him thither, that there he determined to make his abiding, they all returning backe unto Ravenna, and might come to visite him againe so often as they pleased.

" Now, it came to passe, that about the beginning of May, it being then a very milde and serrene season, and he leading there a much more magnificent life, then ever hee had done before, inviting divers to dine with him this day, and as many to morrow, and not to leave him till after supper: upon the sodaine, falling into remembrance of his cruell Mistris, hee commanded all his servants to forbeare his company, and suffer him to walke alone by himselfe awhile, because he had occasion of private meditations, wherein he would not (by any meanes) be troubled. It was then about the ninth houre of the day, and he walking on solitary all alone, having gone some halfe miles distance from his Tents, entred into a Grove of Pine-trees, never minding dinner time, or any thing else, but onely the unkind requitall of his love.

" Sodainly he heard the voice of a woman, seeming to make most mournfull complaints, which breaking off his silent considerations, made him to lift up his head, to know the reason of this noise. When he saw himselfe so farre entred into the Grove, before he could imagine where he was; hee looked amazedly round about him, and out of a little thicket of bushes and briars, round engirt with spreading trees, hee espyed a young Damosell come running towards him, naked from the middle upward, her haire dishevelled on her shoulders, and her faire skinne rent and torne with the briars and

brambles, so that the blood ran trickling downe mainely; she weeping, wringing her hands, and crying out for mercy so lowde as she could. Two fierce Blood-hounds also followed swiftly after, and where their teeth tooke hold, did most cruelly bite her. Last of all (mounted on a lusty blacke Courser) came galloping a Knight, with a very sterne and angry countenance, holding a drawne short Sword in his hand, giving her very vile and dreadful speeches, and threatning every minute to kill her.

"This strange and uncouth sight, bred in him no meane admiration, as also kinde compassion to the unfortunate woman; out of which compassion, sprung an earnest desire, to deliver her (if he could) from a death so full of anguish and horror: but seeing himselfe to be without Armes, he ran and pluckt up the plant of a Tree, which handling as if it had bene a staffe, he opposed himselfe against the Dogges and the Knight, who seeing him comming, cryed out in this manner to him. Anastasio, put not thy selfe in any opposition, but referre to my Hounds and me, to punish this wicked woman as she hath justly deserved. And in speaking these words, the Hounds tooke fast hold on her body, so staying her, untill the Knight was come neerer to her, and alighted from his horse: when Anastasio (after some other angry speeches) spake thus unto him: I cannot tell what or who thou art, albeit thou takest such knowledge of me, yet I must say, that it is meere cowardize in a Knight, being armed as thou art, to offer to kill a naked woman, and make thy dogges thus to seize on her, as if she were a savage beast; therefore beleeve me, I will defend her so farre as I am able.

"Anastasio, answered the Knight, I am of the same City as thou art, and do well remember, that thou wast a little Ladde, when I (who was then named Guido Anastasio, and thine Unckle) became as intirely in love with this woman, as now thou art of Paulo Traversarioes daughter. But through her coy disdaine and cruelty, such was my heavy fate, that desperately I slew my selfe with this short sword

which thou beholdest in mine hand: for which rash sinfull deede, I was, and am condemned to eternall punishment. This wicked woman, rejoycing immeasurably in mine unhappy death, remained no long time alive after me, and for her mercilesse sinne of cruelty, and taking pleasure in my oppressing torments; dying unrepentant, and in pride of her scorne, she had the like sentence of condemnation pronounced on her, and sent to the same place where I was tormented.

"There the three impartiall Judges, imposed this further infliction on us both; namely, that she should flye in this manner before me, and I (who loved her so deerely while I lived) must pursue her as my deadly enemy, not like a woman that had a taste of love in her. And so often as I can overtake her, I am to kill her with this sword, the same Weapon wherewith I slew my selfe. Then am I enjoyned, therewith to open her accursed body, and teare out her hard and frozen heart, with her other inwards, as now thou seest me doe, which I give unto my Hounds to feede on. Afterward, such is the appointment of the supreame powers, that she reassumeth life againe, even as if she had not bene dead at all, and falling to the same kinde of flight, I with my Hounds am still to follow her; without any respite or intermission. Every Friday, and just at this houre, our course is this way, where she suffereth the just punishment inflicted on her. Nor do we rest any of the other dayes, but are appointed unto other places, where she cruelly executed her malice against me, being now (of her deare affectionate friend) ordained to be her endlesse enemy, and to pursue her in this manner for so many yeares, as she exercised moneths of cruelty towards me. Hinder me not then, in being the executioner of divine justice; for all thy interposition is but in vaine, in seeking to crosse the appointment of supreame powers.

"Anastasio having attentively heard all this discourse, his haire stood upright like Porcupines quils, and his soule was so shaken with the terror, that he stept backe to suffer the Knight to do what he was enjoyned, looking yet with milde

commisseration on the poore woman. Who kneeling most humbly before the Knight, and stearnely seized on by the two blood-hounds, he opened her brest with his weapon, drawing foorth her heart and bowels, which instantly he threw to the dogges, and they devoured them very greedily. Soone after, the Damosell (as if none of this punishment had bene inflicted on her) started up sodainly, running amaine towards the Sea shore, and the Hounds swiftly following her, as the Knight did the like, after he had taken his sword, and was mounted on horse-backe; so that Anastasio had soone lost all sight of them, and could not gesse what was become of them.

"After he had heard and observed all these things, he stoode a while as confounded with feare and pitty, like a simple silly man, hoodwinkt with his owne passions, not knowing the subtle enemies cunning illusions in offering false suggestions to the sight, to worke his owne ends thereby, and encrease the number of his deceived servants. Forthwith he perswaded himselfe, that he might make good use of this womans tormenting, so justly imposed on the Knight to prosecute, if thus it should continue still every Friday. Wherefore, setting a good note or marke upon the place, he returned backe to his owne people, and at such time as he thought convenient, sent for divers of his kindred and friends from Ravenna, who being present with him, thus he spake to them.

"Deare Kinsmen and Friends, ye have a long while importuned me, to discontinue my over-doating love to her, whom you all thinke, and I find to be my mortall enemy: as also, to give over my lavish expences, wherein I confesse my selfe too prodigall; both which requests of yours, I will condiscend to, provided, that you will performe one gracious favour for me; Namely, that on Friday next, Signior Paulo Traversario, his wife, daughter, with all other women linked in linage to them, and such beside onely as you shall please to appoint, will vouchsafe to accept a dinner heere with me; as for the reason thereto mooving me, you shall then more at large be acquainted withall. This appeared no difficult matter for

them to accomplish: wherefore, being returned to Ravenna, and as they found the time answerable to their purpose, they invited such as Anastasio had appointed them. And although they found it some-what an hard matter, to gaine her company whom he so deerely affected; yet notwithstanding, the other women won her along with them.

"A most magnificent dinner had Anastasio provided, and the tables were covered under the Pine-trees, where he saw the cruell Lady so pursued and slaine: directing the guests so in their seating, that the yong Gentlewoman his unkinde Mistresse, sate with her face opposite unto the place, where the dismall spectacle was to be seen. About the closing up of dinner, they beganne to heare the noise of the poore prosecuted Woman, which drove them all to much admiration; desiring to know what it was, and no one resolving them, they arose from the Tables, and looking directly as the noise came to them, they espyed the wofull Woman, the Dogges eagerly pursuing her; and the armed Knight on horsebacke, galloping fiercely after them with his drawne weapon, and came very nere unto the company, who cryed out with lowd exclaimes against the dogs and the Knight, stepping forth in assistance of the injured woman.

"The Knight spake unto them, as formerly he had done to Anastasio, (which made them draw backe, possessed with feare and admiration) acting the same cruelty as he did the Friday before, not differing in the least degree. Most of the Gentlewomen there present, being neere allyed to the unfortunate Woman, and likewise to the Knight, remembring well both his love and death, did shed teares as plentifully, as if it had bin to the very persons themselves, in usuall performance of the action indeede. Which tragicall Scœne being passed over, and the Woman and Knight gone out of their sight: all that had seene this straunge accident, fell into diversity of confused opinions, yet not daring to disclose them, as doubting some further danger to ensue thereon.

"But beyond all the rest, none could compare in feare and

astonishment with the cruell yong Maide affected by Anastasio, who both saw and observed all with a more inward apprehension, knowing very well, that the morall of this dismall spectacle, carried a much neerer application to her then any other in all the company. For now she could call to mind, how unkinde and cruell she had shewne her selfe to Anastasio, even as the other Gentlewoman formerly did to her Lover, still flying from him in great contempt and scorne: for which, she thought the Blood-hounds also pursued her at the heeles already, and a sword of vengeance to mangle her body. This feare grew so powerfull in her, that to prevent the like heavy doome from falling on her, she studied (by all her best and commendable meanes, and therein bestowed all the night season) how to change her hatred into kinde love, which at the length she fully obtained, and then purposed to prosecute in this manner.

" Secretly she sent a faithfull Chamber-maide of her owne, to greete Anastasio on her behalfe; humbly entreating him to come see her: because now she was absolutely determined, to give him satisfaction in all which (with honour) he could request of her. Whereto Anastasio answered, that he accepted her message thankfully, and desired no other favour at her hand, but that which stood with her owne offer, namely, to be his Wife in honourable marriage. The Maide knowing sufficiently, that he could not be more desirous of the match, then her Mistresse shewed her selfe to be, made answer in her name, that this motion would be most welcome to her.

" Heereupon, the Gentlewoman her selfe, became the solicitour to her Father and Mother, telling them plainly, that she was willing to be the Wife of Anastasio: which newes did so highly content them, that upon the Sunday next following, the marriage was very worthily solemnized, and they lived and loved together very kindly. Thus the divine bounty, out of the malignant enemies secret machinations, can cause good effects to arise and succeede. For, from this conceite of fearfull imagination in her, not onely happened this long

desired conversion, of a Maide so obstinately scornfull and proud; but likewise all the women of Ravenna (being admonished by her example) grew afterward more kind and tractable to mens honest motions, then ever they shewed themselves before. And let me make some use hereof (faire Ladies) to you, not to stand over-nicely conceited of your beauty and good parts, when men (growing enamored of you by them) solicite you with their best and humblest services. Remember then this disdainfull Gentlewoman, but more especially her, who being the death of so kinde a Lover, was therefore condemned to perpetuall punishment, and he made the minister thereof, whom she had cast off with coy disdaine, from which I wish your minds to be as free, as mine is ready to do you any acceptable service." [1]

To Dante and to Boccaccio belong of right morning and noon in the Pineta; but the evening is ours for it belongs to Byron:

" Sweet hour of twilight! in the solitude
Of the pine forest, and the silent shore
Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,
Rooted where once the Adrian wave flowed o'er,
To where the last Cæsarean fortress stood,
Evergreen forest! which Boccaccio's lore
And Dryden's lay made haunted ground to me
How have I loved the twilight hour and thee!

" The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,
Making their summer lives one ceaseless song,
Were the sole echoes, save my steed's and mine,
And vesper bells that rose the boughs along;
The spectre huntsman of Onesti's line,
His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the fair throng
Which learn'd from this example not to fly
From a true lover—shadow'd my mind's eye.

[1] This translation is from the English version of *The Decameron*, first published in 1620; but in 1569 had appeared *A Notable Historye of Nastagio and Traversari*, or rhymed version of Boccaccio's tale, by C. T., usually supposed to be Christopher Tye the musician. Dryden used this story for his fable *Theodore and Honoria*. It is curious to note that Anita, Garibaldi's wife, was actually hunted to death here in the Pineta by the Austrians.

" Soft hour! which wakes the wish and melts the heart
Of those who sail the seas, on the first day
When they from their sweet friends are torn apart;
Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way
As the far bell of vesper makes him start,
Seeming to weep the dying day's decay,
Is this a fancy which our reason scorns?
Ah, surely nothing dies but something mourns! "

That " sweet hour of twilight " in the Pineta is the most precious hour of the day, when far off across the marsh softly, softly comes the Ave Maria. . . .

" . . . O tu rinnovellata
itala gente da le molte vite
rendi la voce

" de ta preghiera ; la campana squilli
ammonitrice ; il campanil risorto
canti di clivo in clivo a la campagna
Ave Maria.

" Ave Maria ! Quando su l'aure corre
l'umil saluto, i piccioli mortali
scovrono il capo, curvano la fronte
Dante ed Aroldo."

To Porto Corsini

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